The Best Fiction

HERBERT QUICK'S New Novel



Double Trouble



The first comedy novel based on dual personality

In one "state of soul" the hero is a quiet retired business man, a lover of books, proud of a Puritan conscience.

In the other he is a breezy promoter of the Middle West, loud sporty, rakish.

When both careers cross paths there follows a series of mirth-making situations, farcical confusion.

Sixteen Pictures by Orson Lowell.

Bound in Cloth, 12mo, $1.50 postpaid.

MEREDITH NICHOLSON'S Great Success

The HOUSE of a THOUSAND CANDLES

"A most entrancing atmosphere from start to finish."—*Boston Transcript.*

"Piquant, original, charming."—*St. Louis Republic.*

"Dowered with the joy of life."—*Chicago Journal.*

"More than fulfils the promise of its alluring title."—*New York Globe.*

"Should be rechristened 'The Book of a Thousand Delights.'"—*Philadelphia Item.*

"THE BEST ROMANCE SINCE STEVENSON"

Pictures in Color. Cloth, 12mo, $1.50 postpaid.

OCTAVE THANET'S

The Man of the Hour

"The most talked about and the most thought about novel of the year."—*San Francisco Bulletin.* "Fine in spirit and thoroughly readable."—*The Outlook.* "Abounding in interest and in strong situations strongly handled."—*New York Mail.* "Distinctly an American novel and an engrossing love story."—*Chicago Record-Herald.* Illustrated by L. W. Hitchcock. Cloth, 12mo, $1.50 postpaid.

DAVID GRAHAM PHILLIPS'S

The Deluge

"Clever, audacious, intensely interesting."—*Portland Oregonian.* "Interesting beyond measure."—*Philadelphia North American.* "A straight-from-the shoulder story."—*Detroit Journal.* "A novel for Americans, dealing with American people and American institutions, wholesome, interesting and cleverly written."—*Boston Globe.* Pictures by George Gibbs. Bound in Cloth, 12mo, $1.50 postpaid.

HAROLD MacGRATH'S

Hearts and Masks

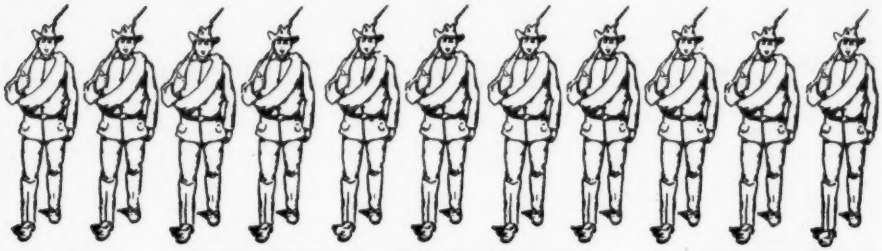
"A simply delicious detective story."—*Boston Journal.* "A peculiarly ingenious story, light and cheerful."—*New York Herald.* "Brightly done in a most readable manner."—*Philadelphia Telegraph.* "Scintilates with wit."—*Pittsburg Times.* Pen Pictures by Harrison Fisher. 12mo, Cloth bound, $1.50 postpaid.

JOHN PHILIPP SOUSA'S

Pipetown Sandy

"Sure to be read with genuine pleasure by all."—*New York Globe.* "The master of music is also the master of romance."—*Minneapolis Times.* "The reader rejoices in the swiftness and vigor of the narrative."—*Philadelphia Record.* "Pipetown Sandy is a boy to win friends by the hundreds."—*Washington Star.* Pictures by C. K. Hinton. 12mo, Cloth. $1.50 postpaid.

The Bobbs-Merrill Company, *Publishers,* Indianapolis, U. S. A.



AN INVADING ARMY

would not be so hostile to the American people and their interests as is the United States Senate.

So declares David Graham Phillips in his tremendous series of articles on

"The Treason of the Senate"

The following—Mr. Phillips' own words—strikes the key-note to this remarkable series:

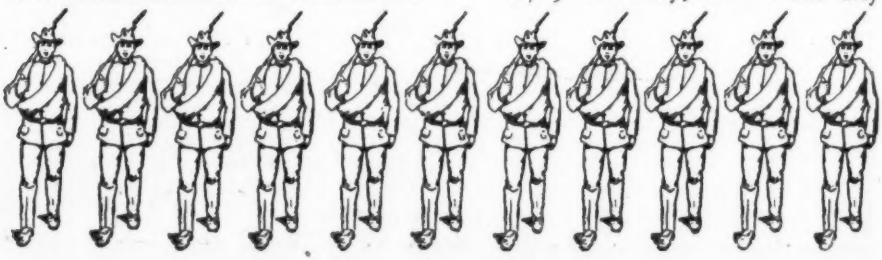
> "The treason of the Senate! Treason is a strong word, but not too strong, rather too weak, to characterize the situation in which the Senate is the eager, resourceful, indefatigable agent of interests as hostile to the American people as any invading army could be, and vastly more dangerous; interests that manipulate the prosperity produced by all, so that it heaps up riches for the few; interests whose growth and power can only mean the degradation of the people, of the educated into sycophants, of the masses toward serfdom."
>
> "The Senate, that is, the Senators as Senators, are at once traitors and unbendingly loyal. They are false to their oaths, false to the people; they are faithful, with the assiduous fidelity of the pocket-interest, to those who elected them. A man cannot serve two masters. The Senators are not elected by the people; they are elected by the 'interests.' A servant obeys him who can punish and dismiss. Except in extreme and rare and negligible instances, can the people either elect or dismiss a Senator?"

No contribution in all the history of Reform Literature will present so much convincing, incontrovertible evidence as Mr. Phillips' remarkable revelations presented in the March

COSMOPOLITAN

10 cents a copy. $1 a year. At all news-stands, or direct from the

COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE - 1789 Broadway, New York City





MR. HALL CAINE

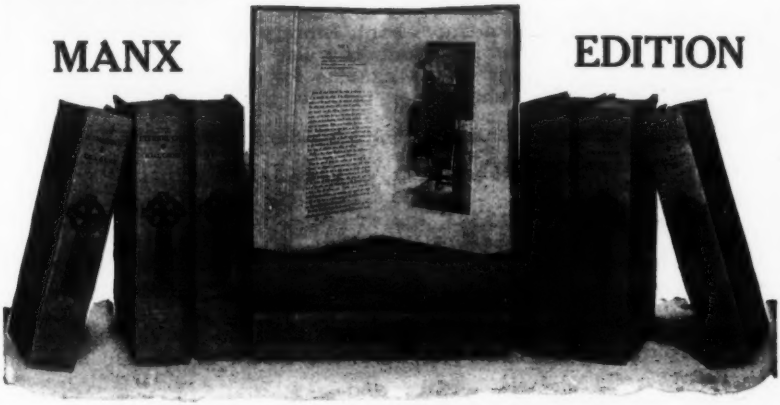
Hall Caine's Works

During the author's recent visit to this country we secured the right to publish the FIRST AND ONLY uniform edition of the writings of HALL CAINE. This beautiful set contains sixteen full-page illustrations, is bound in red buckram with elaborate gold stamping, and the *famous old Manx cross* is reproduced on each volume in gold design.

UNIFORM EDITION IN 9 VOLUMES

The Bondman
The Eternal City
The Scapegoat
The Prodigal Son
Capt'n Davy's Honeymoon
The Manxman
The Christian
Little Manx Nation
The Deemster

MANX EDITION



SPECIAL LIBERAL OFFER

We will send this set of nine volumes by express prepaid and enter your subscription to "APPLETON'S BOOKLOVERS MAGAZINE" for one year on receipt of the coupon (below) giving your name and address. If, after examining the books, you like them, send us $1.00 and agree to pay $1.00 a month for eleven months. If you do not like them return the books at our expense.

SPECIAL MAGAZINE COUPON FREE



D. APPLETON & CO., 436 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Gentlemen:—Kindly send me the "MANX EDITION" of Hall Caine by express prepaid for examination, and enter my name for one year's subscription to "Appleton's Booklovers Magazine." If I am satisfied on seeing the books I agree to pay $1.00 down and $1.00 per month for 11 months, making a total of $12.00. If not satisfied I will return the books to you at your expense.

*Name*_____

*A Address*_____

OPEN TO READERS
of AINSLEE'S
FOR THREE WEEKS

$2.10



SELECT ANY BOOK
FROM THE
LIST PRINTED BELOW

$2.10

The Best Combination of 1906

THE BIGGEST BOOK AND MAGAZINE OFFER

Make out a subscription order as printed below for **The Metropolitan Magazine** for one year and a Tabard Inn Library Membership and we will send you your own choice from the list below of any **Tabard Inn Exchangeable Book.** That is the Magazine for a year and a New Book for $2.10. The regular subscription price of the Magazine is $1.80.

FORM *of* ORDER

.....*1906*

THE TABARD INN LIBRARY
1611 Chestnut St., Philadelphia

Dear Sirs:—I enclose herewith **$2.10** *for which you will enter my name for* **THE METROPOLITAN MAGAZINE** *for one year beginning with the..... number, and send me by mail prepaid a new copy of the following Book .....; the Book to be in a Tabard Inn Case and TO BE EXCHANGEABLE FOREVER at any Tabard Inn Library in the United States.*

Name.....

Full Address.....

Make Your Book Selections from the Following List. All Late Books or New Editions

1. **The House of Mirth.** Edith Wharton
2. **The Gambler.** Mrs. Thurston
3. **Hearts and Masks.** Harold MacGrath
4. **The Conquest of Canaan.** Tarkington
5. **Fair Margaret.** F. Marion Crawford
6. **The House of 1000 Candles.** Nicholson
7. **The Wheel of Life.** Ellen Glasgow
8. **The Westerners.** Stewart Edward White
9. **In Old Bellaire.** Mary Dillon.
10. **The Czar's Spy.** Wm. LeQueux
11. **The Call of the Wild.** London
12. **The Hon. Peter Sterling.** Ford
13. **The Kindred of the Wild.** Roberts
14. **The Long Arm.** S. M. Gardenhire
15. **A Maker of History.** Oppenheim
16. **The Man on the Box.** MacGrath
17. **The Prisoner of Zenda.** Hope
18. **Rupert of Hentzau.** Hope
19. **The Virginian.** Owen Wister
20. **The Prospector.** Ralph Connor

NOTE.—**THE METROPOLITAN MAGAZINE** is taking front rank among the leading popular magazines of the country. No magazine offers a better list of contributors; none offers more beautiful illustrations; few, if any, offer articles of such wide popular interest. Look up any number on the news-stand and judge for yourself. The Magazine may be sent to a different address from your own if you wish.

Address: The Tabard Inn Library, 1611 Chestnut Street Philadelphia

Try It At My Expense --Not Yours

If you are not a reader of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE I want you to become one. I want you to know what it is like, and to know at my expense if the magazine does not suit you. If it does suit you, and the price is right, you will naturally wish to pay for it. There isn't much in the theory of getting something for nothing.

MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE is worth your knowing. It was MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE that led off a dozen years ago in the low price for magazines—ten cents a copy and one dollar by the year. It was the fight we had with a giant News-Company monopoly—that made MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE possible, and that blazed the way for all other publishers whose magazines are issued at the price of MUNSEY'S. But this is too big and too graphic a story to be told in this advertisement.

Munsey's Magazine

Has the biggest circulation of any standard magazine in the world—much the biggest. And it has made it and held it solely on its merits. In a dozen years we have not spent a dozen cents in advertising. We have no agents in the field—not an agent anywhere—we have given no premiums, have clubbed with no other publications, and have offered no inducements of any kind whatsoever. We have made a magazine for the people, giving them what they want, and giving it to them at a right price—that's all. And the people have bought it because they like it and because they could buy it at a right price. Our object in advertising now is to reach a few hundred thousand new readers—people who are not now taking MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE.

A Ten Thousand Dollar Magazine for Ten Cents

Though there are a good many three dollar and four dollar magazines in America, there is none better than MUNSEY'S, whatever the price—not one. There is no higher grade magazine, there is none better printed or printed on better paper, and there is none better or more carefully edited—none better written and few, if any, so interesting. It costs in round numbers about **ten thousand dollars a number** to go to press on MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE. That is to say, if only one copy were printed it would cost ten thousand dollars, but spreading this cost over an entire edition of **750,000 copies**, the amount gets down very thin on each individual copy.

When I first made this price, a dozen years ago, everybody said it was impossible—said we couldn't live—said we were bound to fail. We did live, however, and today are publishing **a thousand tons** of magazines a month, which is fifty carloads. This is more than three times as many magazines as were issued by all the publishers combined of the entire country when I came into the business.

It is because I am so sure of the merits of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE, and so sure it will please you, that I am now offering to send it to you without any money in advance, and without any money at all if it does not please you. I can afford to take this chance, which, as I see it, is a very small chance, because I believe thoroughly in the rugged honesty of the people. The percentage of dishonesty among the citizens of America is far too small for consideration in a business proposition of this kind.

There is no trick in this offer—no hidden scheme of any kind whatever. It is a simple, straightforward, business proposition which will cost you nothing unless you wish it to.

The All-Story Magazine Also Free

I will not only send you MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE, as stated above, but will send you three months free, in addition, THE ALL-STORY MAGAZINE, which is another of our publications. I add this other magazine for two reasons. First, that you may have the choice of two magazines, and second, with the thought that you may want both.

If this proposition interests you, and I hardly see how it could be made more to your interest, kindly fill out the coupon in this advertisement and mail it to me, and you will get the magazines as stated herein.

FRANK A. MUNSEY, New York City: 62

You may enter my name for one year's subscription to Munsey's Magazine, for which I agree to pay you one dollar ($1.00) at the end of three months, providing I find the magazine to be what I want.

In the event that I do not care for the magazine, I will so notify you at the end of the three months, in which case I shall owe you nothing.

It is further agreed that in connection with this subscription you are to send me The All-Story Magazine free for three months, and that I am to have the option of changing my subscription, if I so desire, from Munsey's Magazine to The All-Story Magazine for the balance of the year.

*Name*_____

*City*_____

*Dated*_____ *1906* *State*_____

Frank A. Munsey, 175 Fifth Ave., New York

THE ORIGINAL FICTION MAGAZINE OF AMERICA IS

THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF CLEVERNESS

IT CONTINUES TO BE ORIGINAL

"Something new in literary conception all the time," said the "BOSTON GLOBE" of the January number.

The success of "THE SMART SET" is due to the excellence and high-class character of its fiction, its humor, its poetry and its general contents.

"So many look forward to it as to the coming of an old friend," said the Pittsburgh "CHRONICLE TELEGRAPH" of the New Year's number.

With "THE SMART SET" you are abreast of the times in all that is best in fiction, poetry and humor.

READ THE MARCH NUMBER

Now ready, and see how true this is.

The Novel is ARTHUR STRINGER'S great and exciting Detective Romance

"PHANTOM WIRES"

A new departure in the modern fiction of crime.

SEWELL FORD contributes a fine story, "A CASE OF SISTER ANNE."

EDNA KENTON'S "THE EMPTY GLASS" is powerful.

ELLIS PARKER BUTLER'S "ELIPH HEWLITT, ELUCIDATOR," is very humorous.

A new writer, ARTHUR STANLEY WHEELER, is introduced. His story, "TIED," is really noteworthy.

The frontispiece this month is a fine portrait of

MRS. WHITELAW REID

(The wife of the American Ambassador to the Court of St. James) with Autograph. It alone is worth the price of the magazine.

Price 25 cents Annual subscription $2.50

Subscribe now, and receive FREE the three portraits that have already appeared

THE SMART SET 452 Fifth Avenue, New York

THE MALEFACTOR



THE most powerful and absorbing story ever written by Mr. E. Philipps Oppenheim, has for its central figure a man who has become a convict to save a woman's good name. When set free, he is a millionaire, brilliant, well educated, forceful,—able to do what he pleases, but without a trace of human sympathy or emotion. He has become a silent, implacable, relentless creature,—a menace to society and his fellow-man. **The Malefactor** is a book of big emotions and virile, daring men and women, with a plot so intricate and absorbing as to hold the reader in spite of himself. Anyone reading this story will feel the exhilaration of its rush and excitement. It is now running serially in

THE POPULAR MAGAZINE

the biggest 10c. fiction magazine in the world. The best adventure stories written anywhere in the English language are in "The Popular." Subscribe for it, commencing with the March issue, in which **The Malefactor** starts. You will secure the first reading of the biggest novel of the year, together with a magazine that is full of live, clean, adventure stories, novelettes and serials. One dollar and the time required to fill out and tear off the coupon in the corner will do it for you. A book like **The Malefactor** costs $1.50. For $1.00 you can get both it and the magazine.

Fill this out. Enclose $1.00. Send to-day.

Street & Smith
79 Seventh Ave.
New York

Enclosed $1 for 1 year's subscription to The Popular Magazine beginning .....

Name.....

Address.....

.....

A PERSONAL TALK WITH THE SMITH FAMILY.

With the March number of SMITH'S, we are getting out the best magazine we have ever produced. It cost more; it represents more in trouble and thought; it is better illustrated and printed—in short, it comes nearer our ideal of what a magazine ought to be than anything that we have hitherto turned out. Just a moment, while we tell you a few things about the magazine.

The contents of SMITH'S naturally falls under four heads—fiction, art work, special articles, and departments. We will say a word about each of these separately.

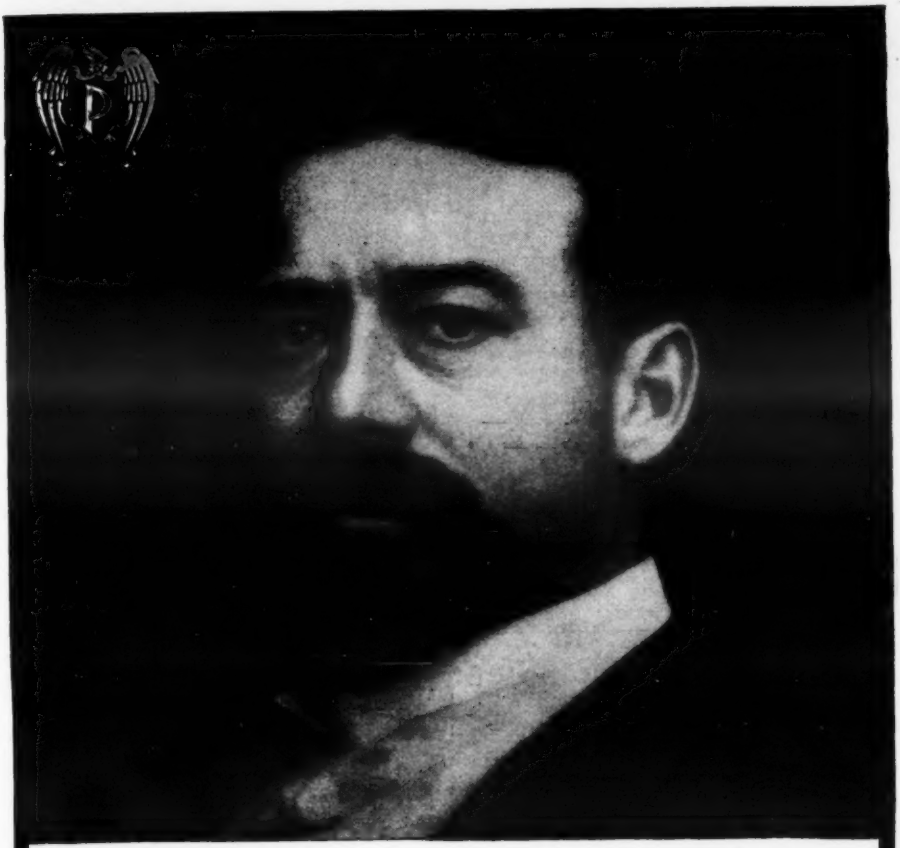
The Fiction in the March number is contributed by Edwin L. Sabin, John D. Barry, William Hamilton Osborne, and others of the same class. Edwin L. Sabin is writing a series of tales about two incorrigible twin brothers. The first of them, "The Adventure of the Postponed Spanking," appears in this number. John D. Barry commences, in this issue, a serial story telling the adventures of a country family who came to New York in the hope of making a hit on the stage. With its simple pathos and realism of the better sort, this story is sure to create a literary sensation. "The Old Maid's Corner," by William Hamilton Osborne, is the story of a woman wheat-farmer, and how she fought capital and won.

Art Work—SMITH'S is probably the most profusely illustrated fiction magazine published. It opens with a series of art studies of prominent actresses, printed on heavy calendered paper, in two colors, by a special half-tone process. Besides this, there are a number of half-tone pictures of prominent people, and a series of special designs to illustrate our fashion department. A woman will appreciate these when she sees them.

Special Articles—Lynn D. Jocelyn discusses the "Race-Course Evil," and gives advice from personal experience to the man who thinks he can beat the book-makers. "The New Knowledge of the Sun," by A. Frederick Collins, gives you the results of the recent scientific discoveries in this direction. A sketch of David Belasco tells what the dramatist is as a man, and makes the reader feel as if he were personally acquainted with him. "Under Florida Palms" tells how millionaires dodge the cold weather.

Departments—We pride ourselves especially on the standing features that help to give SMITH'S its unique character among a host of magazines. The Fashion Department is practical and helpful. We show how the newest fashions will look when they are worn. And for the woman who makes her own clothes, we give a carefully written, helpful essay on the making of each piece of apparel that we illustrate. SMITH'S fashions and patterns are already welcomed by a host of women. "The Passing Hour" gives an illustrated chronicle of the world's progress. If you read nothing but this, you would still be up to date in your knowledge of men and events. "The Sermon" is what we call a helpful, vigorous talk to our readers, written for us each month by Charles Battell Loomis. The drama of the month is always described and commented on. In the March issue, Channing Pollock deals with the cheaper kind of play in an article entitled "Sitting in Judgment with the Gods." This paper is an interesting, outspoken treatment of a subject of which the every-day critic fights shy. It contains a ringing attack on those managers who pander to the lower natures of an ignorant audience.

Besides these departments, there are a number of distinguishing features to SMITH'S. The humorous poems by Wallace Irwin, which appear in each number, and the jokes and epigrams that are scattered through it lavishly, all help to increase its interest and attractiveness. It is the biggest illustrated magazine in the world, and every page is crammed with interesting matter. From its very nature, SMITH'S is able to make a STRONGER APPEAL to MORE PEOPLE than any periodical published.

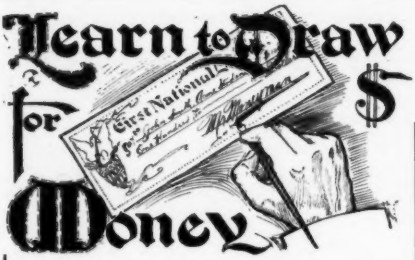


The Publishers of PEARSON'S MAGAZINE take pleasure in announcing that JAMES CREELMAN has made a contract with them to write and work exclusively for and with PEARSON'S for a long term of years.

Mr. Creelman's efforts will naturally be exerted in the field of national journalism, the field in which for years he has held his place at the top of his profession—ever since he conducted for the *New York World* the brilliantly successful attack upon the Cleveland-Morgan bond issue, which resulted in a second issue being withheld from the Wall Street syndicate and sold direct to the people at large (in a five times over-subscribed campaign), to the tremendous saving of money for the government, and the lasting renown of the patriotism and financial soundness of the citizens of the United States.

10 cents a copy **PEARSON'S MAGAZINE** $1.00 a year

Learn to Draw for Money



The best evidence of what an Acme course can do for you is what it has done for others.

We would like to send you **free** our Ready-Reference-List of over 300 satisfied students living in all parts of the world.

This book also contains fac-simile and autograph letters with photographs of other students who tell what we have done for them.

One student secured a good paying position after only four months' study. His name is Wm. R. Williams, Mishawaka, Ind.

Frank S. Brown, Albany, N. Y., secured a fine position before he had completed his course. What others have done, **you** can do with our help.

WE TEACH DRAWING—NOTHING ELSE.

We can train anybody who wishes to learn to make the kind of drawings business men **want** and will **pay for.** We will enable **you** to earn from **$18 to $40 per week** in some reliable establishment.

We teach thoroughly by mail the following courses:
Newspaper, Magazine, and Book Illustrating.
Caricature, Cartoon and Comic Drawing.
Commercial Designing and Lettering.
Mechanical Drawing, or Architectural Drawing.
Sheet Metal Pattern Drafting.
Special Course for School Teachers.

Write for full information and state which of the above courses you want to investigate, sign your name and full address, and mail to

ACME SCHOOL OF DRAWING,
ESTABLISHED 1898
164 Chase Block, Kalamazoo, Mich.

SHORTHAND IN 30 DAYS

New System Which May be Mastered By Home Study In Spare Hours.

We absolutely guarantee to teach shorthand complete in thirty days. You can learn in **spare time** in your own home, no matter where you live. No need to spend months as with old systems. Boyd's Syllabic System is different in principle from all other systems. The first radical improvement in shorthand since 1839. It is easy to learn—easy to write—easy to read. Simple. Practical. Speedy. Sure. No ruled lines—no positions—no shading, as in other systems. No long list of word signs to confuse. **Only nine characters** to learn and you have the entire English language at your **absolute command.** The best system for stenographers, private secretaries, newspaper reporters. Lawyers, ministers, teachers, physicians, literary folk and business men may now learn shorthand for their own use. Thousands of business and professional men and women find their shorthand a great advantage. By learning the Boyd Syllabic System, speeches, lectures, conversations, ideas, contracts, memoranda, etc., may be committed to paper with lightning speed. The Boyd System is the only system suited to home study. Our graduates hold lucrative, high grade positions everywhere. Send today for free booklets, testimonials, guarantee offer, and full description of this new Syllabic shorthand system. Address

CHICAGO CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS
975 Chicago Opera House Blk., Chicago, Ill.

Real Parisian Life



Tales More Fascinating and Exciting than Balzac or French Court Memoirs.

I have secured the sets of Paul de Kock which were awarded the Gold Medal at St. Louis. Rather than rebind them — they are slightly rubbed through handling—I will sell them at *half price* as long as they last, and upon small monthly payments, and send them carriage free.

Paul de Kock

The Merriest French Humorist,

has written sparkling, witty, amusing, riveting novels—antidotes for melancholy. The stories, literally translated, race merrily along, nothing didactic or dull; as original as Boccaccio, as mirthful as Gil Blas, more fascinating than Sterne or Smollet.

SHORT FASCINATING STORIES

"Paul de Kock is a tonic in books instead of bottles." *Max O'Rell.* "His charming characters seem to be under the influence of champagne." *Charles Lever.* "He has kept France laughing for years—the Smollet of France." *Boston Herald.* I dislike the superlative but I believe this the best and richest book value ever offered. The set contains the most delicate and Artistic French illustrations made specially for this work by Glackens, Sloan, Wenzell, Sterner, and many other famous artists.

ILLUSTRATED BOOKLET FREE

giving you full particulars and sample pages of this rare set of books, but you must write to-day, stating whether you are interested in cloth or half morocco binding.

CLINTON T. BRAINARD, 425 Fifth Ave., New York (A—Mch. '06)

Please send me particulars. I am interested in the..... .....binding

Name.....

Address.....

A TRAIN LOAD OF BOOKS

PRICES CUT 50% to 90%

David B. Clarkson, THE BOOK BROKER

I buy more bankrupt stocks of first-class new books and more publishers' editions than any other dealer in America.

I sell more books to the public than any man in America. I ship books to every country in the world. WHY? Because I sell books at less than half price. You read books, and, in justice to yourself, you must have my **free** catalogue of books. I sell almost any book or set of books on the market for less than half, and many fine books and sets at less than one-quarter price. I sell every book under guarantee to be new, perfect and satisfactory, or money back without question or quibbling.

THE REASON WHY I sell books at less than half regular price fully explained in my catalogue of books. My book catalogue is free. It will save you more than one-half. Write for it to-day. Lest you forget, do it now.

DAVID B. CLARKSON, The Book Broker, Dept. E, Chicago

WHY NOT LEARN SIGN PAINTING?



Show Card Writing or Lettering

Only field not overworked. Separate courses. Ours is the only practical, thorough and personal instruction. We teach by mail and guarantee success. Easy terms. Write for large, interesting **FREE** catalogue.

The Detroit School of Lettering, Dept. 22, Detroit, Mich.
"Oldest and largest School of its kind."

LEARN TELEGRAPHY BOOKKEEPING OR SHORTHAND

BY MAIL--AT YOUR OWN HOME

Anyone can learn it easily in a few weeks. We are unable to supply the demand for telegraph operators, bookkeepers and stenographers. **No charge for tuition until position is secured.** Write today for particulars.

MICHIGAN BUSINESS INSTITUTE,
430 Institute Building, Kalamazoo, Mich.

When writing to advertisers please mention Ainslee's

LEARN TO WRITE ADVERTISEMENTS

The PAGE-DAVIS SCHOOL is a great magnet which attracts only men of true steel. It does not lift wooden men out of the rut.

"HE'S a bright fellow, strange he doesn't get along any better." How often you have heard that said about a man, and perhaps wondered why it was so. Observe closely and you will find he doesn't KNOW THINGS OF COMMERCIAL VALUE, things that bring a big price in the business market, as it were. The REALLY "BRIGHT FELLOW" is the one who studies advertising, and is thus in command of knowledge that brings from $25.00 TO $100.00 A WEEK. The REALLY "SMART MAN" is the one who sees the necessity of first acquiring this business knowledge and then applying it in such a way as to ADVANCE HIS BUSINESS or INCREASE HIS VALUE to his employer. There is no reason why a man of ambition—"a man of steel"—should remain in a cramped position.

There is not as much competition in the little places in the advertising field as there is in the big places in every other line. PREPARE THOROUGHLY WITH US, BY MAIL, FOR ADVERTISING, and you will find yourself stepping out of a crowded field where salaries are boiled down and getting into an OPEN ONE WHERE $25.00 TO $100.00 A WEEK IS PAID.

The question of your opportunity in the uncrowded field of advertising, after you have learned it, is answered by the experience of E. T. Mateer, formerly a drug clerk who left a little spot in California and CROSSED THE CONTINENT TO NEW YORK TO ACCEPT A SPLENDID POSITION, because he was prepared by us to do the work. This shows you the chances in the best business in the world.

The following letter is still further evidence of the practical value of our course:

GRAND FORKS, Dec. 13, 1905.

Gentlemen:—About six months ago you put me in touch with BERMER, BEGG & GARWIN of this city and after the usual correspondence I accepted the position offered as advertisement writer. My salary is now OVER THREE TIMES WHAT IT WAS WHEN I STARTED TAKING YOUR COURSE and I cannot be too loud in my praises of your thorough instruction.

Yours very respectfully, *W. M. Baldwin*

Our assistance does not stop with the experience of one student; hundreds, yes thousands, can tell interesting stories of advancement varied as their surroundings and ambitions vary. One that strikes me as worthy of your attention, is the following:

PHILADELPHIA, PA., Feb. 11, 1905.

Gentlemen:—It is sufficient to say that I WAS STENOGRAPHER IN A RAILROAD OFFICE while taking the course; AM NOW ADVERTISING MANAGER for C. J. HEPPE & SON, the largest PIANO AND MUSICAL HOUSE in Philadelphia.

I heartily endorse the work done by the PAGE-DAVIS SCHOOL, and wish it continued success.

Cordially yours, *J. W. Darwin*

We can offer you no higher evidence of the value of our instruction than the success of our students. We could reproduce equally convincing letters from John Gibson, of New Bedford, Mass.; Chas. A. Goodeve, of Acton, Ont.; John N. Russell, of Salem, O., and hundreds of others who have had their incomes doubled and trebled by getting into the advertising business through our practical instruction. What it has done to build up business—to lift other small-salaried men out of the narrow confines of cramped positions, it will certainly do for you—unless you are a MAN OF WOOD. If you are really made of the KIND OF STUFF THAT GETS AHEAD in this world, that won't be deterred by circumstances, you will write at once for our large prospectus which puts the whole business of advertising before you, and learn the things that we can do for you in your particular case, for your particular advancement.



Page-Davis Company:
Send me, without cost, your prospectus.

Name .....

Address .....

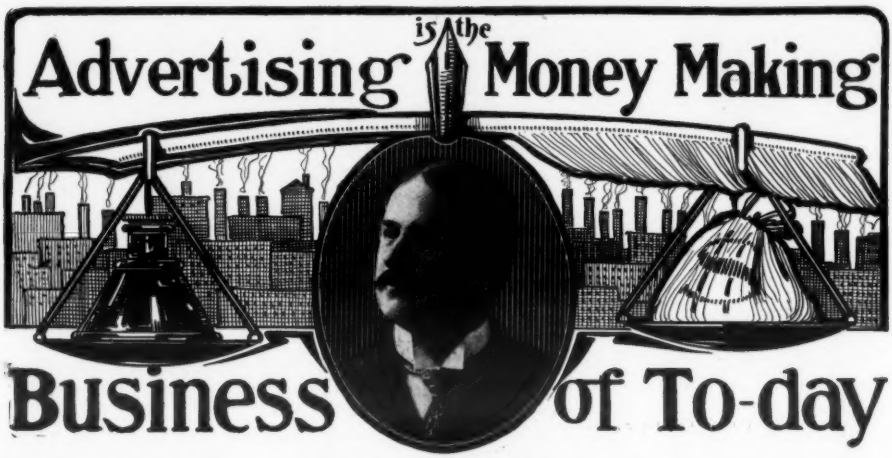
City .....

State 310

PAGE-DAVIS COMPANY

Address Either Office:

90 Wabash Ave., Chicago **150 Nassau St., New York City**



From Clerkships and Subordinate Drudgery to $1,200.00—$6,000.00 a Year.

Advertising offers the greatest opportunities to ambitious young men and women.

As soon as they become skillful the business world awaits them, and it is a matter of choice whether they engage on a salary with large advertisers or open their own offices and work for several small advertisers.

Why More Ad Writers Are Wanted.

Within the past eight years—ever since the Spanish-American War, in fact—the possibilities of modern, scientific advertising have been made clearer to thousands of business men in such a decided way that each succeeding year shows hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of increased space carried in the twenty thousand or more American publications.

This, too, without regard to the increasing millions of dollars' worth of booklets, and other printed matter that are profitable investments according to the advertising skill that enters into their production.

In a word, modern competition demands more and better advertising, and the business or profession is so young that advertisers are eagerly seeking trained brains

How to Become An Expert.

As I have said a hundred times—probably a thousand—one can only become expert through actual experience, and the Powell System of Correspondence Instruction meets this requirement perfectly. It is the only system that separates true correspondence instruction from the sort that should be culled from books—such as Powell's Practical Advertiser—thereby saving the student both time and expense.

I can train any brainy student, with a common-school education, to write and originate the finest advertising in the shortest period.

Simple analysis and models—even better than any oral instruction—begin the real practice, and it didn't take me long to prove to the general manager of the greatest dictionary publishers that the Powell System by correspondence far surpasses any other kind.

And an hour or so of conscientious study and practice per evening is the main requirement.

STUDY THE TWO FREE BOOKS.

I have two free books to mail young men and women who desire to quickly double their salaries and secure congenial positions—my elegant new Prospectus and "Net Results," which are the most explanatory ever published.

Of inestimable value, also, to business men who wish to increase their trade.

The achievements of former students are also given, together with the strongest endorsements of the great experts and publishers.

For the free books address me

GEORGE H. POWELL, 13 Metropolitan Annex, New York

EARNED MONEY BEFORE HALF THROUGH.



Edwin N. Close, 506 S. Albany St., Ithaca, N. Y., writes:

"Your way of teaching ad writing is practical and full of originality, and as an educator in business its real value is fully known only to those who have finished the Powell System. Each lesson is clear, concise, and pointed—nothing left to the imagination.

Your ability to create originality in a student's mind is remarkable. Each student is made to think and along the right lines—a Powell student is always a thinker.

I began writing ads before half through the course and was never at a loss what to say and how to say it. Money was never better invested than with you. Those who contemplate a thorough advertising education, and are in doubt, just refer to me."

AINSLEE'S

THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS

VOL. XVII

CONTENTS

No. 2

FOR · MARCH · 1906

Cover Design	*Clarence Underwood*	
Vanessa's Dilemma. Novelette	*Robert Adger Bowen*	1
The Dust Cloud. Short Story	*E. F. Benson*	58
A Sonnet in Vowels. Poem	*Felix Carmen*	65
The Peau de Cygne. Short Story	*Frederic Taber Cooper*	66
Society as a Merry-go-round. "The Outsiders." Essay	*Mary Manners*	73
The Age of Wisdom. Poem	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	78
A Closed Incident. Short Story	*Vincent Harper*	79
The Precipitancy of Van Vleck. Short Story	*Henry C. Rowland*	88
Valentine. Poem	*Clinton Scollard*	96
Ellen Berwick. Short Story	*Anne O'Hagan*	97
Romance. Poem	*S. E. Kiser*	106
Captain Cosgrove's Homeopathic Cure. Short Story	*L. Frank Tooker*	107
A Conqueror. Poem	*Charlotte Becker*	114
In Connection with Billy's Bank. Short Story	*Mary B. Mullett*	115
The Human Instinct. Short Story	*Jane W. Guthrie*	122
Sanctuary. Poem	*Aldis Dunbar*	128
Society at the Opera. Essay	*Charles Henry Meltzer*	129
Bridge and Some Cross Roads. Short Story	*Beatrice Hanscom*	135
The Hypothetical Case. Short Story	*Parker L. Walter*	142
The Dream Seeker. Poem	*Madeline Bridges*	148
Making a Roman Holiday in New York	*Channing Pollock*	149
For Book Lovers	*Archibald Lowery Sessions*	157

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION $1.80 SINGLE COPIES FIFTEEN CENTS

Monthly Publication issued by AINSLEE MAGAZINE CO., Seventh Avenue and Fifteenth Street, New York.
Copyright, 1906, by Ainslee Magazine Co., New York. Copyright, 1906, by Ainslee Magazine Co., Great Britain. *All rights reserved.*
Publishers everywhere are cautioned against using any of the contents of this Magazine either wholly or in part.
Entered September 11, 1902, at New York as Second-class Matter, under Act of Congress of March 2, 1879.

WARNING Do not subscribe through agents unknown to you. Complaints are daily made by persons who have been thus victimized.

Absolutely Pure — Natural Color — Full Strength

BAKER'S
BREAKFAST
COCOA



Has had the endorsement of the best housekeepers throughout the country for over a century and a quarter.

46 HIGHEST AWARDS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA **46**

Place an order for it with your grocer.

WALTER BAKER & CO., Limited

Established 1780 DORCHESTER, MASS.

AINSLEE'S

VOL. XVII. MARCH, 1906. No. 2.

VANESSA'S DILEMMA

By ROBERT ADGER BOWEN

OUT of the hurrying mass of people before him she suddenly took individualized form. Perhaps it was the dainty elegance of her figure, perhaps it was the somberness of her heavy mourning, perhaps it was merely some subtle emanation of her own personality, that gave Bobbie Winthrop the first sensation of healthy interest he had experienced in connection with the long railroad journey ahead of him. He felt instinctively that a woman who walked in that way must be of an individuality.

They passed by the several baggage and express cars of the train that stood made up with its passenger-coaches in front, and went by the two or three nearer "sleepers." His own Pullman car, he knew, was the one just behind the engine. As they passed yet another, his interest quickened. He saw her stop to speak to a porter, who pointed on down the long line of coaches. He caught the glimpse of a face under the folds of the crape veil. It was his own car that she finally entered, and he found they were the only occupants. The heat was stifling.

As he hung up his hat, and stuck a cap upon the mass of wavy hair that made his young manhood look so boyish, Bobbie took occasion to glance across the car at his companion. She, too, was removing her hat and veil, and smoothing with deft touches of very lovely hands the golden disorder of her hair. He liked a fair hand upon a woman, and the splendor of the hair negatived the gloom of the mourning. As he watched, her eyes lifted, and met his own. A few moments later he went forward into the observation compartment of the coach.

He was aware that his attitude to women was what would have been called "old-fashioned." He knew it had sometimes been called by a harsher name, and he a fool for his fealty to an ideal. Women might be unworthy. He would never outlive his instinctive creed that Woman called for all that a man held best of reverence. But he was a cosmopolitan, and travel, he told himself now, leveled many barriers of mere convention, and the journey before him was long and tiresome, and he had noticed many coupons, also, on the ticket of the girl who was to share this journey with him. Why should they not speak to each other? Why should he not speak to her? Yet might she not misunderstand? He dared not have her think that he thought lightly of her.

He saw, without heeding, the green marshes of the Jersey flats through which the train was dashing, and as he watched he compounded further with his conventions and traditions. As he was given to action rather than to thought, he had about finished the process when he suddenly started at a

voice falling upon his ear, the note of interest carrying it over any natural reserve.

"The tracks are entirely under water," it said. "I wonder what it means."

Bobbie sprang to his feet as she passed by him out upon the platform. The tracks were under water, and the huge engine was going over them slowly, casting angry-looking waves forward against the masonry walls of a semi-tunnel. Bobbie forget that he had not answered the question until the girl spoke again as they both stood leaning over the railing. A moment more, and she turned away, her curiosity in the unusual occurrence abated.

Bobbie stood irresolute. The few words he had uttered struck him as absurdly stiff as he recalled them. Evidently the girl did not intend that he should follow up this beginning of an acquaintance, and yet she, too, had paused. He turned with a species of desperation.

"I fear you are very uncomfortable in that stuffy car. Let me place a chair for you here in the doorway."

"Thank you," she responded sweetly. "I expect to be uncomfortable."

In some way he did not feel abashed, and he drew up a chair against the open door. She sank into it with a little, formal nod of acknowledgment of the courtesy. The train had resumed full speed, and now and then a flutter of water was thrown back from the engine.

"You are in danger of a wetting, however," he said, when he saw this.

"It is immaterial." She weighed the ensuing silence to a nicety, then broke it crisply: "You are very kind."

Bobbie began to be amused. She was undeniably pretty, but already he felt that her charm in its chiefest did not lie in her good looks. He had a distinct impression that his sentiment for her had suddenly shifted from his heart to his head. It steadied him as a dash of bitters after much wine.

"We are to be fellow-journeymen for a long time," he affirmed, with wholesome candor of expression.

She raised her dark eyes to his.

"I inferred it," he responded to the glance, "from the length of your ticket and from your being in this car."

"Inferences are seldom sure. I had thought of stopping over in Washington." There was a rebuff in the words which something about the poise of the head belied. It was an expectant poise.

"You will change your mind, then," he ventured, in appreciation of that poise, "for the sake of a companion over miles of tedious road—that is, if you are as wise as I am sure you are."

She gazed up at him in frank amazement. There was not a trace of undue familiarity in tone or face. It was a handsome face, she noticed, as the light from the car fell on it.

"Another inference," she said at last. "On what do you base it, may I ask?"

"On my own wisdom in reading character."

She gave him another quick glance, and, seeing that he met her eyes with honest amusement, made him no answer.

The engine was plunging into the black spaces of the night, huge, indistinguishable, palpitant with mighty life. Far ahead, out of the darkness, flashed every few moments the lightnings of a coming storm. In their lurid glare Bobbie could see a little distance from him the white face and golden hair of the woman, held erect and intent. Once, in an unusually brilliant flash, she turned to him with a smile of camaraderie that he was quick to recognize. A second later, and the rain drove them in.

After he had dined, Bobbie did not find her in their car. He had not presumed to ask her to join him at dinner, and he did not see her again that night. The fact tinged his meditations with something that was akin to regret. He rose late the next morning, and when he had leisurely breakfasted and smoked a cigar, he felt it in the nature of a reward for self-denial that he should seek his own car, with its observation platform.

As he had half expected and wholly hoped, she was there, comfortably ensconced in one of the wicker armchairs.

She was looking as fresh as the morning, and flashed him a greeting with her eyes which warmed his blood curiously. It had something to do, also, with his attempt to get a chair, which was much too large to go through the doorway, out upon the platform.

Perhaps the girl felt a little compunction for having avoided him the night before, or it might have been that she felt it incumbent upon her to restrain him. There was a flitting smile about her lips as she took in the sinuous lines of his broad back that did not fit exactly with either possibility.

"You can't bring out any of those chairs," she remarked affably, seeing him throw aside that he had first taken and select a smaller one. "I had to coax the porter for this, and I promised him I would not set a bad example. You can get a stool, though."

Bobbie beamed upon her. There was, then, to be no need of a formal introduction. He looked jubilantly young for his six feet of height and his twenty-six years, and his clean wholesomeness defied the stains of travel. His companion thought he beamed too patently.

"It is for any of the passengers, of course," she said evenly, when he had planted his body on the low stool squarely before her, and let his eyes seek her face. "Isn't this the twistiest road you ever saw?"

"It's beastly," he assented heartily.

She took up her magazine, and turned its pages rather listlessly.

"Why did you hide yourself so soon last night?" he asked. "I sat out here 'way into the night."

"I was sleepy. Traveling always makes me want to doze."

"Irrespective of companions?"

"Quite."

He watched the single track spin out behind them, narrow, and vanish. On the banks above, plumed pines brushed against the blue sky and were hidden in a whirl of yellow dust. Here and there a deserted negro cabin spun by dizzily. He turned his gaze abruptly to the girl.

"Do you wish to doze now?"

"I am almost asleep. This story is very depressing. Love stories usually are, don't you think?"

"Put it down, then, and talk to me."

She glanced at him with a slight lifting of her brows, and closed her book. There was a bright glimmer under her lashes that gave him thought.

"We have no acquaintance or community of interest," she said.

"You are wrong. An hour of travel together is as a year of ordinary urban life, and, besides, we are both getting jolly good and dusty, and not thinking of it a bit."

"If you can make interesting conversation on that basis, I am willing."

"I wish I knew your name," he affirmed suddenly. "It is like writing without any capitals—this kind of acquaintance."

"It will serve to pass the time. Almost anything does at sea, or traveling as we are doing. Besides, it is much more interesting to talk of what you are than of who you are."

"What you are makes me want to know who you are."

She studied him closely.

"I wonder if that is the truth," she said. "I am an anomaly—an eighteenth century makeshift shifting for herself in this twentieth century."

He looked his inquiry frankly.

"I'm a governess going to enter upon her duties," she responded a little incisively.

"So that is the touch of old-world charm about you that puzzled me!"

It was her turn to look questioningly upon him. He hesitated an instant, leaning forward, his elbows on his knees.

"I knew you were clever before I saw your face."

"No one would say *you* were, from such a compliment. And who ever heard of charm being one of the qualifications of that drudge, a governess? And I never heard of there being anything old-world about me. Tell me if all the South is like this." She swept her hand about to signify the particularly arid fields through which they were dashing. "I believe I am going

to an ancient place, miles from any railroad."

"It will probably be as unlike this, then, as anything could be. Railroads are wounds upon the face of any land. Would you mind telling me the name of the place?"

She told him the station, and, at his look of heightened interest, the name of the plantation. "The devil!" he exclaimed, on hearing it, and sat bolt upright.

"I decidedly hope not," she returned, unabashed. "But possibly you know. I was told that my employer was an eccentric but highly respectable man. Do you know him?"

"He is my brother," Bobbie replied, still, as it were, electrified by what he had heard. "I am going there myself."

II.

"Had I known, Robert, that it was your intention to do us the honor of this visit, I should have been tempted to request you to postpone it until after Miss Joyce's arrival and the assumption of her new responsibilities. You were always given to taking people by surprise. Time does not seem to change you."

The dimly lit dining-room almost swallowed up the four figures seated about the dark mahogany table, bare of cloth, and illumined only by the four single candelabra, each incased in its tall cylinder of cut glass. It quite swallowed up the old negro butler who stood in the heavy shadow behind his master's chair, the whiteness of his collar the spot of high light in the general gloom.

Bobbie noted carefully and with apprehension the effect of his brother's pompous and tactless speech upon the sensibilities of Vanessa Joyce. It lifted a load from his mind to have her eyes, twinkling beneath their assumed gravity, look into his for an instant. For his own part, the rudeness was immaterial.

"I am glad, then, that I did not let you know, James," he responded airily. "Once we fairly came to know each other, I think both Miss Joyce and I were the happier for the companionship. I am sure I was."

"To know each other!" exclaimed Miss Sabina Winthrop, flying abruptly across the question. "I thought, Miss Joyce, you had met my nephew only this evening." The implied interrogation was made positive by Miss Sabina's laying down her hot biscuit and folding her hands in her lap.

"Formally, yes," answered Vanessa demurely, "but informally, Mr. Winthrop and I came down together."

"Came down together!"

"Aunt Sabina," expostulated James, in a tone of pained resignation, "the subject is not in need of a Greek chorus."

"Greek chorus!" echoed his aunt, still with her hands in her lap, but leaning forward the better to see across the wide table. "I know nothing of Greek choruses. I am thinking of the need of chaperons."

With the rare tact of his kind, the ancient negro took occasion of the ensuing silence to pass around the table with the biscuits upon his silver waiter. Bobbie watched the girl opposite to him take one.

"What delightful biscuits these are!" she said, turning then to her hostess.

"They do very well for biscuits," that lady replied, resuming her fork.

"You would scarcely expect them to make satisfactory chaperons," Bobbie urged, with daring levity. "Who are in the neighborhood this summer, Aunt Sabina? Are all the places open?"

"The neighborhood never changes. You know that. Surely you have not come down here with an expectation of gaiety?" It was James who spoke.

"The gods forbid," laughed Bobbie.

"I am sure it is a very delightful neighborhood," said Vanessa gravely. Her glance lingered on Bobbie. "I noticed the village as we drove through. It had such an English look. And so many churches!"

Miss Sabina stiffened.

"Do you believe in a multiplicity of churches?" she asked severely, heading

off her elder nephew, who was about to speak.

Vanessa pondered her reply.

"I thought them finger-posts," she said rather tentatively.

"And so they are," exclaimed Miss Sabina, with a triumphant look at James, "but pointing in all the contrary directions."

"Perhaps Miss Joyce thinks all roads lead to heaven," Bobbie offered rashly, for his aunt turned upon him with celerity.

"If she does she's a fool," she asserted.

To Bobbie's immense relief, the delight in Vanessa's face was undisguised. His brother was eating with glum deliberation. The old darky again handed the biscuits. Vanessa, feeling that it was best to speak only when she was spoken to, and a doubtful expedient even then, drank her coffee in silence. It was excellent coffee. It seemed to her a long time before Miss Sabina pushed back her chair and rose from the table.

Bobbie led Vanessa across the hall and into the big drawing-room beyond. It loomed cavernous in the shaded light of the candles upon the mantel, which threw gigantic shadows across the shining floor and flickered over the dark portraits with uncanny suggestiveness.

"Are we to sit in here alone?" she asked. "I am not in the slightest degree imaginative, but your ancestors seem to be comparing notes."

"If you are to the manner born," laughed Bobbie, "you will sit outside on the piazza. It is dark there, but cool. But it may be that you are tired."

It was a perfectly natural thing for him to be playing the host to her in his brother's house. It had once been his own home, and the uncongeniality between himself and its present owner had existed since boyhood. Moreover, he was determined to ease for this girl all he could her adjustment to her new surroundings.

"I should like the piazza," she answered, "but is there a chaperon hanging up anywhere around?"

"How jolly of you not to mind them," he said.

She laughed, then drew herself up a little stiffly.

"Don't forget that it isn't for me to mind them."

He regarded her in silence; he had forgotten completely. The reminder made him writhe under the recollection of the recent half hour, and his original feeling of repugnance that she should have been destined to cast her lot with his brother's household.

"Come," he said bruskly, and took her out through the open French window to the piazza.

When he had made her comfortable in a big, low chair filled with many cushions, and their eyes had grown used to the starless darkness of the night, he spoke to her.

"Whatever made you come here?"

"What but an empty purse?"

"You know I did not mean to ask that," he said, with reproach that in some way pleased her. "I was only thinking that I wish I could have warned you."

"Tell me now," she entreated. "I'm not really a guest, you know, and I am awfully curious. How did he ever get to be your brother?"

His glance followed the outline of her face as she looked toward him, leaning forward on her elbow. The attitude betokened a complete understanding of good companionship between them, yet for an instant it flashed across him that he actually knew nothing about this very attractive girl. He smiled. That she was attractive, at least, he knew.

"I am afraid you are just a little bit wicked, Miss Joyce," he said, with a commendable gravity.

"That's rather nicely put. I am so little all over that your charitable limitation reduces my wickedness to a minimum. I plead guilty to that. Now gratify my inordinately large curiosity."

"Your question should be, how came I to be my brother James' brother? He is fifteen years my senior. I am the offshoot from a trunk of solid vir-

tue. I am the stray lamb, or, if you please, the black sheep."

"I am so glad," she interrupted. "I thought you looked so, and I much prefer black sheep. They are much more intelligent, and, after all, their skins are just as clean. I never did appreciate the lamb as a type of purity. Why did you stray?"

"Need you ask? My brother was my keeper. My aunt was his."

"Ah!"

Bobbie smiled at the perfectness of her comprehension. For a moment he was silent, then added:

"To give James his due, it was not until I chose an Eastern university instead of his alma mater, and then settled in New York at a profession he detests, that he finally renounced me. He has never forgiven, and, of course, the natural breach has widened. I come down here once a year to see about my own place, and generally stay here for the sake of auld lang syne."

"You have a good deal of that sort of thing in you, have you not?" she asked, with a little air of judicial acuteness that amused him. "You have a place near here?"

"Adjoining. It was my share of the estate—a younger brother's share, you understand. There is only an old one-story house on my place, given over to cobwebs and rats."

"And the profession?" she asked, the unaffectedness of her interest going to his head like wine. However, he answered simply enough:

"I am a lawyer."

Vanessa lay back in her comfortable chair, thinking. She decidedly liked this big, clean-limbed fellow who, she realized, also liked her. She liked him not the less for learning that his outer graces were backed by the substantial virtues of landed property and a remunerative profession. She recalled the many evidences of prosperity about his dress and bearing. She sighed softly to herself in the encompassing darkness.

"You are tired," Bobbie said. "I have been boring you."

"That is not kind of you. I was taking a momentary advantage of our so long friendship to be silent."

Bobbie felt very grateful.

"I think we are going to be good friends, don't you?" he asked. "I confess, when I first heard you were coming here, I felt knocked in a heap. You understand a little why?"

"I am going to like it," she replied with decision. "I have a small soul for the country, but odd people are my delight. You don't mind my calling your family odd?"

"I don't mind it a bit," he assured her. "But, Miss Joyce, it occurs to me that you may find my aunt a little more than odd—rather difficult, in fact. She either likes or dislikes."

"Why should she dislike me?"

"You are assuming her prerogative in connection with the kid, and——" Bobbie hesitated.

"Yes?" she asked expectantly.

"It is unfortunate, however delightful to me, that we should have become acquainted in such an informal manner."

"Dear me!" Vanessa exclaimed. "How funny! So she was really in earnest about the chaperon! I must explain to her that my father was an artist, a Bohemian. I grew up in a studio, Mr. Winthrop, and I should have gone on the stage but for my mother's example. I suppose your aunt would be scandalized."

"She would," Bobbie assented candidly. "And, what is more to the point, she would never forgive you for it."

"I shall take especial pleasure in imparting the knowledge to her. What a blood-curdling sound that is!"

"A little laughing-owl," he assured her. "Are you at all superstitious?"

"Not in the least, but it is very dark out here. I think we had better go in."

"Do not, please. We are not missed, and not wanted. My brother is busy over his correspondence; then he will read his Bible for an hour. My aunt is dozing over her novel. I always sit out here, and you would be in misery in there."

She laughed.

"What a formidable man your brother seems to be! And yet, do you know, I rather like him? How long has his wife been dead?"

"A woman would be wearing purples."

"Ah!" she exclaimed, lapsing into silence, and he wondered a little at some subtle jarring of emotions within him. There was no doubt that James had a way with women.

The sounds of the night rose into a vibrancy, continuous, harmonious. To the undersong of the tree-frogs came the shiver of an owl's cry, and the distant whistle of the whippoorwills from the bottom-lands. In the looming shadows of the garden a mocking-bird was making deliciously tentative pianissimo notes. The air was laden with the heavy sweetness of magnolia and jessamine and a tangle of other perfumes.

The silence lasted long between them. To the man it was a consecrating silence, for the sensuous beauty of the Southern night was lapping his soul into a dangerous state of exaltation. He was conscious that the sense of his nearness to the dimly outlined form of the woman beside him was giving him exquisite pulsings of delight. What could such a muteness of sympathy mean but that some answering chord in her breast had been struck, also?

What it really meant was that Vanessa was trying to adjust herself to that unexpected factor in the situation in which she found herself, which was represented by the young fellow whose eyes she could feel in the darkness fixed intently upon all that he could see of her face. He was a disconcerting factor, which put upon her the responsibility of choice, and there was a vague feeling in her that the choice would be a difficult one. Whether it was the languor of the night or the fatigue of her journey, the idea of this now was distasteful to her. Just at the instant that Bobbie was conscious of his nerves tingling with a strange, insistent joy, Vanessa was wishing that he had not come into her ken at the precise period of her life now being rounded. And because she liked him, and was glad he was there beside her, she wished the more that he had not come. What would happen, she wondered, if a pinch of love should get into his blood!

III.

Mrs. Trezivant Grimké stood in her front hall drawing on her driving-gloves. She was tall, modish, very naturally blond. Behind her on an ottoman lounged her brother, lazily taking in the details of her tailor-made gown. Mrs. Grimké was speaking.

"Let me drive you over to the Winthrops', Jack. I am going to call on that new little governess of theirs. She's very pretty, too—big brown eyes and golden hair, and a change of expression for every breath. And Bobbie is there, also, you know. You ought to show some interest in him."

"Bobbie's all right." Young Rutledge stretched out a leg and turned over, with the point of his shoe, a roll in his sister's skirt as it lay upon the floor. "I met him in the village the other afternoon. He didn't say anything about the new governess, by the way."

"Get your hat, like a good boy," urged his sister.

"I'm afraid of governesses, Bess. They're dangerous."

"Nonsense! You are conceited." She reached for a cap that lay upon a settle near by, and threw it into his lap. "Come on," she reiterated. "You owe it to Bobbie. I do not like to see old friends drift apart."

"Especially small ones," he went on, unmindful of her interruption. "Can't you go alone, with Gregg?"

"I'm afraid to take Gregg along, Jack. James Winthrop can be so horrid about what he calls my 'flippant follies.' I'm mortally afraid of James and Miss Sabina, you know."

"I know nothing of the kind." He laughed as with seeming reluctance he permitted her to draw him to his feet. "You like nothing better than to score them heavily."

Having gained her point, Bess led

the way to the veranda without replying. They were strikingly alike, the masculine and the feminine presentment of the same type. When she had taken her seat on the high box; Rutledge drew back once more.

"See here, Bess," he pleaded. "Do you realize that this means that I must talk to old Sabina while you chat with the little governess? Let me off."

"Not a bit of it. Besides, there's Bobbie for you. Or I'll take Bobbie, and you can have the little governess. How's that?" She patted the seat next her imperatively.

"It's as usual," he laughed, climbing up—"your own way. You are looking stunning this afternoon. Who's it all for—the governess?"

"Perhaps, and perhaps not. It may be for Bobbie. I never have been able to settle it with my own mind—and Trezivant—whether I shouldn't have married him. The irrevocableness of marriage is a dreadful thing, Jack."

"Is it?" he responded absently. "So I've always told you."

"For the woman, I mean. It's nothing for a man. For the man it is merely an extra suit of clothes—to be gotten into when he chooses, and always to be found nicely pressed and ready."

"You and Trezivant been quarreling?"

"Dear me, no! Only I thought I'd like to have a little flirtation with Bobbie Winthrop, but what's the use? Trezivant wouldn't even frown. He feels so sure."

"And Bobbie wouldn't flirt. He was always something of a muff with the women."

"Wouldn't he? What do you call that?"

They had turned into the main road, and as Rutledge spoke the cart rounded a curve, and Bess pointed with the whip ahead of them.

"I call it the yellowest topknot I ever saw, except on a canary. Do you think it's natural?"

"Very natural that Bobbie should be driving the new governess in his own road-cart. They say they came down together on the train, introduced themselves, and so on."

Bess drew rein and let the distance between Bobbie's cart and her own grow greater.

"'They say,'" her brother quoted. His eyes were following the rapidly disappearing figures.

"Miss Sabina. She was telling everybody at church yesterday."

"Old cat!" he muttered, just as Bobbie's cart vanished. Then he sighed.

"Wait until you see her face, though, Jackie dear," Bess said sweetly.

Ten minutes later he saw it. Vanessa was sitting on the piazza at the top of the stairs when they drove up.

"Miss Joyce," Bess called out to her from below, "my brother and I have come to welcome you to Carolina. This is my brother Jack, and his other name is Rutledge. Everybody calls him Jack, though."

"I suppose it wouldn't do to say Mr. Jack," Vanessa said, smiling up at him, while Rutledge himself stood looking at her eyes, her hair, her lips, and back again to her eyes and hair.

"Where's Bobbie?" Bess asked, moving toward a lot of chairs at the corner of the piazza. "And—oh, yes! is Miss Sabina at home?"

"Very well remembered, Elizabeth," Miss Sabina herself replied from the drawing-room. "I am at home, thank you, and will claim some of the attention of your visit." She came through the French window, and, having greeted her visitors, drew from Vanessa's hands her especial chair. "You can get another," she vouchsafed curtly. "This one just fits my back."

A determined expression set Bess' lips.

"When you have quite become one of us, Miss Joyce," she said with a smile, for which her brother blessed her, breaking the repression of her mouth, "you will learn that we are awfully conservative down here, even to the matter of the chairs we sit in. You will then as little think of sitting on Miss Sabina herself as of appropriating her chair. Isn't it so, Miss Sabina?"

That lady drew in her breath with a cold little laugh that had the effect of a hiss.

"You were always one to have something of a mind of your own, Elizabeth," she said, "though I don't always admire it."

"How do you like your little pupil?" Bess asked, turning to Vanessa.

"He is a little dear. I shall be fond of him."

Miss Sabina, smarting under her recent rebuke, struck in with a chill smile that charged the air with antagonism.

"Miss Joyce is doubtless wondering why the boy's father should have thought it necessary to bring her here. Clare is unusually well informed for a child. I have seen to that."

Vanessa's eyes narrowed, then dilated as she turned them to Bess' amused face. Rutledge was fidgeting in his chair. Suddenly she smiled brightly.

"I expect to learn so much from my little charge. He has such a fund of old-fashioned information."

Miss Sabina stiffened to retort, but at that moment Bobbie swung around the corner of the piazza, and Bess sprang to meet him, the action bringing Vanessa and Rutledge close together.

"Oh, you dear old boy!" Bess cried. "If no one was watching, I could find it in my heart to hug you. Why haven't you been to see me yet? But I need not ask. Jack's hit, too. He has lost his tongue, and his manners, and, I'll swear, his heart."

"The same old rattletrap," Bobbie responded affably. "You've grown handsomer, if possible, Bess."

She sighed.

"'Full many a flower,' you know," she quoted. "You haven't begun to break yet yourself, Bobbie."

She held him for a few moments in the frank enjoyment of the renewal of their lifelong intimacy, but all at once she became aware that his interest was divided. She followed his gaze to the group at the corner of the veranda, and shook her blond head deprecatingly.

"I thought he was inoculated, but look at that." She nodded toward her brother, who, seemingly oblivious of Miss Sabina's presence, was devoting himself assiduously to Vanessa. The next moment Bess saw Bobbie's frank eyes cloud unmistakably. Her own widened.

"Dear me!" she murmured. "I'll warn him off, Bobbie. Don't look so glum. It's that remarkable hair," she thought to herself, as they joined the others.

She watched Vanessa shrewdly the while Miss Sabina indulged in acid comments about the shelving of matured people before their time had come, and when the age offered no fit substitutes; the ingratitude of close relations to a lifetime of unselfish devotion, and the superiority of old-fashioned methods to newfangled ideas. Bess paid but a perfunctory attention. She was occupied with the rapidity of the movement of the comedy before her. Vanessa, between the two men, was holding them in easy thrall. The veriest dunce could have seen it.

"What do you think of that?" Miss Sabina queried, following Bess' glance, and ceasing her plaint abruptly.

Bess was not inclined to say what she thought, so she kept silence. Miss Sabina, shielding her lips with her turkey-tail fan, leaned closer, her eyes alight.

"She's a minx," she breathed, not without a thrill of enjoyment. "It will be James next, and I hope so, too. I've had my thoughts."

Bess started. The idea of James Winthrop entangled by his child's governess was preposterous. Miss Sabina, now thoroughly alert, saw the thought in Bess' mind, and smiled.

"Oh, there's no signs yet," she said. "At least, not any that any one but a passée old woman would notice. But she's adaptable, Elizabeth, adaptable. An adaptable woman, when she's good-looking, to boot, and no fool besides, is a viper. I hope James will be stung."

"Good Lord!" ejaculated Bess, aghast at the possibilities, and impressed with Miss Sabina's vehemence. "But are you not mistaken?"

"You ask that! Look for yourself."

And Bess looked. If the attitude of two well set up and stalwart young men attentive upon the charms of a vivacious and pretty girl ever expressed devotion for the charmer and a jealous deference for each other, the attitude of Bobbie and Jack expressed it now. Bess smiled delightedly, her spirits rising.

"The geese!" she murmured.

"Not so," whispered Miss Sabina. "The kite and the doves." But the idea of Bobbie and her brother being doves quite finished Bess, and, to Miss Sabina's disgust, she laughed outright. After that she cruelly called Bobbie to her.

When Bess and her brother had gone, after an invitation to Vanessa to dine at "The Ridge," and Miss Sabina had entered the house to see about supper, Bobbie took Vanessa out upon the lawn.

If he was not actually in love, it was only because he had not yet dared to call the state of his feelings by that name, and sever of his own will the frail cord that binds a man in his condition to certainties of friendship in exchange for the unknown possibilities of a stronger declaration. The appearance of his old chum scattered such unlover-like prudence to the winds, and Bobbie, alive to the fact that he was jealous, knew that he loved.

Vanessa had been very circumspect. She had watched with varied emotions that pinch of love of which she had thought get into his lusty blood. That it was to grow by such rapid strides she had not foreseen, nor had she any mind to be swept to sea on the surges of so big a passion as Bobbie's.

Vanessa was adaptable. In that Miss Sabina was quite right. It had not taken her three days to get beneath the hard crust of James Winthrop's personality, and to inspire him with such confidence in her ability and sound sense that already he had come to rely upon her judgment and defer to her opinion. His harsh manner thawed perceptibly when she was about. His pomposity of conviction grew almost suavely deferential. She disliked him, and she decidedly liked Bobbie. Still, she did not wish Bobbie to become importunate. She had no intention of allowing her hand to be forced. And now she hardly knew whether to be glad or sorry that Jack Rutledge had come upon the scene. There might be safety in numbers; there was also distraction of judgment.

She knew intuitively that Bobbie was not glad. Almost as quickly she realized in what manner the leaven was working within him, and that if she was to stem the tide of his ardor diplomatically it behooved her to be prompt and careful. So she began at once, her interest in the question by no means lacking in vitality.

"Tell me about your friend. I halfway liked him. He is such a foil for you."

They were strolling under the sweeping branches of some great oaks, and the sickle-moon threw dim shadows in the scented twilight. Bobbie was too far infected with his love to respond very enthusiastically.

"They used to call us Black and White, because we were so different and yet so inseparable. What did you think of Mrs. Grimké?"

"They reminded me of Siegmund and Sieglinde. And you grew up with them? There is a husband?"

"There is always a husband in the South," he answered, bestowing a side glance upon her at the question. "We are too poor and not sufficiently fashionable down here to indulge in divorce."

The topic did not especially appeal to Bobbie. He drew Vanessa's attention to the exquisite softness of the evening, for his heart was big with his love. He touched her hand lightly as a mocking-bird near them threw liquid notes of his even-song to the clear crescent of the moon. It was as though the rapturous music had burst straight from his own heart.

"Tell me what Mr. Rutledge does," asked Vanessa calmly.

Bobbie withdrew his hand.

"Oh, something in cotton. In fact, he does not have to attend to anything

very strenuously. Both he and Bess have money." There was a vibrancy in his voice that was not lost on his hearer. It somewhat disquieted her.

"And Mr. Grimké?" she inquired, with nice afterthought. "I must be informed about our neighbors."

Occupied with other thoughts, Vanessa was insensible to the potency of the hour upon one so attuned as Bobbie. There was nothing to her in the sighing of the pines above their heads or in the pungent odors which their feet pressed from the path, padded deep with the dry brown needles. She was unobservant of the fading of the green gray woods into the purple shadows of twilight, indistinct and mysterious with the whispers of the approaching night. These things were making dangerous riot in the full courses of Bobbie's veins. Suddenly he barred her farther way in the moon-dappled path, and stood looking down upon her, ominous in his silence.

"I wonder if you know——" he began, when Vanessa, startled, executed a swift flank movement. Could he have read it, there was the finest kind of comprehension in her nod of dissent. She glanced up at him with a brilliancy in her eyes that cut the semi-darkness of the shadows.

"Where are you taking me in these gloomy woods?" she asked. "Don't they give you the blues?"

"They are filled with a rose-hued light," he answered, his big frame quivering.

She wheeled about, facing homeward and the west. "Are you tall enough to see the sunset glow over my head?"

He was not discouraged by this very patent misconstruction of his meaning, and Vanessa knew it.

"Heads have nothing whatever to do with it."

She raised her eyes quizzically, but she could not hold her own against what she read in his face. The insincerity of her mood availed nothing, opposed to the earnestness of his ardor. He would brush aside her coquetry as a hungry man would despise a sugar-plum. She drew her brows together in impatience at the *impasse* to which he had brought her.

Bobbie hesitated; in fact, afraid. As yet the sense of his love was so new to him that he hugged it to himself even while eager to impart it. He was eager for its confirmation; he shrank from its possible denial. Inadvertently, in the thickening dusk, Vanessa touched him as they walked. Bobbie forgot his fear.

"Do you know——"

"Don't ask me to-night what I know," she pleaded quickly, her face tremulous with a swift emotion she could not have defined, but which thrilled him with appeal and with a bounding hope.

She heard him call her by her name, and knew that she ought to tell him that he must not do so. As they came out of the pines, and crossed the wide stretch of road before entering the gate, Bobbie saw by the light of the low-swinging moon that her face wore a puzzled look. Her after treatment of him that evening was not encouraging.

IV.

Vanessa sat late at the window of her room. She had put out her candle, not that she might enjoy the dusky splendor of the starlit night, but that she might not attract the attention of the flying and creeping things of the Southern summer. Though she did not consciously appreciate the massed shadows of the silent trees, and the indefinable gray darkness of the open spaces, or often raise her eyes to the luminous low stars, the influence of the brooding earth stole over her imperceptibly.

Her mood was one of vague dissatisfaction. She felt piqued at her destiny for rushing her along with the rapidity of the past few hours. She was provoked with Bobbie for complicating things, but she would not have minded this so much but for a strange and very unpleasant feeling of unrest and self-distrust with which he had filled her. She realized that it was absurdly petulant, but she blamed Bobbie be-

cause her liking for him had denied her the policy of decidedly chilling his desires. In the game she had elected to play there was no room for sentiment.

It was during her father's lingering illness that Vanessa had determined upon the course of her action, once his inevitable death should have thrown her absolutely upon her own resources. She and her father had never been sympathetic, and the fact that at the close of his artistic career he should be leaving her penniless after an upbringing of extravagance and waste did not tend to make her feel more kindly toward him at the end. She stated her object to herself clearly and emphatically, as she might have put any business proposition. The avenues of self-support pursued by the army of dependent girls did not in any way connect with her desires. She loved ease and luxury and the costly things of life: she detested the drudgery by which those who did not have these things attained their shadowy substitutes. A rich woman might add to her estate by marriage; a poor woman had no choice, it seemed to Vanessa, but to make a good marriage. So it was that she began her independent career with the object not of making money, but of making a moneyed marriage. Without connections and without means, this object presented sufficient difficulties.

Scarcely had the grave closed over her father before Vanessa invested the bulk of his life insurance in a costly wardrobe—black was very becoming to her—and registered in several of the foremost teachers' agencies in New York. She did not like to teach; indeed, she had never done so; but she had been well taught herself, and the plan offered her a possible freedom from work during the summer months. It was not at all what she had had in mind when the first opportunity presented itself, that of taking charge of James Winthrop's child; but though Vanessa had never thought of being a governess, she did not hesitate an instant when the batrachian-voiced principal of the agency informed her that Mr. James Winthrop was a young widower of comfortable means, whose exclusive tastes, no less than the isolation of his ancestral home, made him adhere to the services of a governess for his son. The appearance of Bobbie had been an unlooked-for factor in the proceedings, but he was a distinct asset in her plans, provided she could sway him and not be swayed by him. In the advent of Rutledge she had seen a further augmentation of these assets.

The night was almost preternaturally still. When Vanessa became aware of its profound quietude she began to hear silent sounds that sent little tremors through her. In the heavy darkness the old house seemed to her fancy to be breathing softly. She was grateful when the loud voice of a negro praying explosively in his distant cabin smote upon the perfumed air. Now and then a hound bayed dismally from some shanty beyond the bottoms. She leaned her head back against the window-casing and lifted her eyes to the star-pointed sky.

It was a frankly practical view of her situation that she essayed to take. She recalled, as she might have done the events of a day's shopping on Broadway, the growing interest that her employer was palpably evincing in her. It was an interest, moreover, which, in a manner, was defining her relations to others. Already in her behalf he had snubbed his aunt upon two occasions, a fact not at all tending to allay Miss Sabina's resentment at Vanessa's intrusion into her home, or her assumption of duties which she had hitherto regarded as her own especial charge. The complete control with which Vanessa had been invested with regard to her pupil the elder lady looked upon as a distinct usurpation of her rights. James' generosity of faith in this respect had, indeed, embarrassed Vanessa for the moment, but it was only for a moment. She had the next instant recognized potentialities in this aspect of the case, also.

Only that morning there had been a handsome rose lying at her plate. Clare, she knew, was not allowed by Miss Sabina to pull the best roses. Bobbie

she had heard whistling in his room as she had come down-stairs. She did not credit Miss Sabina with the delicate attention. When James entered the room, his shoes wet with the dew, the exquisite Gloire de Dijon had been pinned upon the neck of her white gown. She had seen him start and flush dully at her daring, and a species of contempt stirred at her heart now at thought of the ease with which she knew she could play him.

Her mind reverted to Rutledge. Unless he was of the most evanescent temperament, she felt that she understood him, too. His evident surrender to her smiles, and the attraction of the man himself, put a pause upon her. Adulation was not so common a thing with her that its fumes should be wafted lightly aside. She smiled with eyes half closed.

There was, in fact, something delightfully soothing in the gently stirred fragrances of the sleeping garden. The balmy air came to her over banks of violets and jessamine, its breath was sweet with opoponacs and mimosa. Vanessa did not know what they were, but she sighed with a fine satisfaction that some day it might all be hers.

But she frowned as the memory of her walk with Bobbie among the pines recurred to her. The recollection dashed her enjoyment. It disquieted her. It filled her with a sense of far-off awe where she would fain have seen nothing but levity and the froth of comedy. The smile died on her lips as she remembered what her last words to him in the woods implied. Something like a wave of impatient anger swept through her at thought of his masterful impetuosity. She recklessly threw aside the influence of his honestly adoring eyes. Leaning her elbows on the window-sill, she combated this mood which she felt, did she yield to it, would carry her into unknown seas. She hardened her ears, and, forgetful of her surroundings, spoke aloud in a rebound of her spirits, tapping the fingers of one hand upon the window-sill as she spoke, one after the other.

"Three men! Time in abundance! A harpy of an old maid! Vanessa Joyce, you're a fool if you are on salary long." She laughed softly.

A voice quite other than her own seemed to come at her out of the darkness, freezing the blood suddenly in her veins. It was a voice as gentle as a breath, but it cut like a lash with its irony:

"Are you aware, Miss Joyce, how easily sound carries in the stillness of the country night? My window, you may remember, is next to yours. Perhaps you have that unfortunate habit of talking in your sleep! Perhaps you have not!"

Vanessa sat breathlessly still, biting hard the tip of her tongue in impotent wrath at her folly. She did not dare look out of the window, lest she encounter Miss Sabina's triumphant eyes. This is precisely what she would have done, for the old lady, leaning far out of her own window, was trying to look into Vanessa's room. She was, however, as little deceived by not being able to see anything as by Vanessa's prudent silence.

"I have not been asleep, though, so there can be no question of my having been dreaming," she went on, with a crisp incisiveness for which Vanessa hated her, "and even had I been, it is not as a harpy that I should have thought of myself." Her tone warmed suddenly into anger. "But I can tell you now you are not going to marry into my family if I can put a stop to it, and if you do marry either of my precious nephews, the other one gets all my money. I shall tell them so, and also what I have heard you say to-night."

"They will not believe you." Vanessa spoke coolly enough, though her blood was tingling and a dizziness was about her heart. She remembered gratefully that both Bobbie's room and his brother's were at the other side of the big house. She rose and, seating herself comfortably on the window-sill, leaned her body out. Though the night was warm, Miss Sabina was seized with a sudden shivering at the words.

"You are a very daring young woman to speak to me so," she said, her teeth

chattering. "I do not like you." The very inadequacy of the words conveyed the strength of the feeling that lay behind them. "Who are you, anyway?" she asked abruptly.

Vanessa saw that she was angry, and laughed gently at her own handiwork. She did not really fear Miss Sabina. She did not like her at all. She determined to spare her nothing.

"Who I am does not in the least concern you," she responded, calmly rude. "Who I am to be I have not quite decided—yet."

Miss Sabina had never before been so nearly told to mind her own business. The shock passed quickly, leaving her very angry. She also flung discretion to the winds.

"And I need not ask *what* you are," she replied, and so rapidly had her mind acted that the words came pat as repartee. "It will be an agreeable duty, Miss Joyce, for me to do all I can to compass your dismissal from the position of trust you so wrongly hold."

Vanessa laughed. Her ill-humor, indeed, as well as her first trepidation, had entirely left her. She was merely amused. Miss Sabina's anger, on the other hand, increased in proportion.

"Oh, you needn't laugh, my dear young lady. I mean what I say, and I'll spoil your little game. I'll not be a harpy for nothing, Miss Joyce."

Vanessa leaned farther out of her window; for an instant she contemplated swinging her feet out upon the shed.

"Did I really call you that?" she asked. "I thought it was something else."

"Miss Joyce," shrilled the old lady, shaking impotently, "I have no desire to bandy words with you."

Vanessa threw out her arm in a comprehensive little gesture of surprise.

"Then straighten your nightcap, and go to bed," she admonished. "Do you really sleep in it?"

Miss Sabina choked and coughed. "You are a very impertinent young piece!" she gasped. "That is, if you are as young as you make yourself appear! I very much doubt it."

Vanessa thought rapidly. Was it wise to antagonize her foe needlessly? Miss Sabina might prove no inconsiderable opponent. She yielded to a swift impulse.

"Why have you always been my enemy, Miss Sabina?" Her voice was not untouched with earnestness. If she thought to appeal to her hearer's sympathies, however, she found herself mistaken.

"I disapprove of you," was the response. Miss Sabina was reaching out for her shutters with both arms. There was no use in prolonging this bootless discussion.

"But why?" reiterated Vanessa. "I should be glad to have your goodwill."

"I've no doubt of that," laughed the old lady. "You might even think it worth angling for. But you will never have it."

"I am sorry," Vanessa murmured, torn between a desire to laugh and a sense of anger.

Miss Sabina sniffed.

"Checkmated, you mean," she corrected.

The girl's face flushed, her eyes hardening under cover of the night. There was a relentlessness in this animosity, and an indifference to any concealment of it, that stung her. The fact that she had so foolishly played into hands that would not scruple to take advantage of the slip filled her with an active hostility.

"I do not see what business it is of yours, one way or the other," she allowed herself to say warmly.

"Naturally!"

"And your wishes shall, of course, make absolutely no difference to me."

"I am not so sure of that."

For a moment there was silence between them. The plaint of a little owl in the woods beyond the lawn sounded eerily. Vanessa murmured something about a dog in the manger. Miss Sabina took her up alertly.

"A dog in the manger!" she cried. "And with my own nephews, and a man whose bibs I pinned on him when he was a bubbling baby!" As the full

meaning of the taunt struck home, she leaned far out over the shed, and broke into strident anger. "How insolent of you to insinuate that of me! Had I accepted all the suitors who courted me, I might have been a Bluebeard—who courted *me*, do you understand, Miss Joyce?"

"Oh, yes," laughed Vanessa; "they all say that."

Miss Sabina never yielded easily, but a sudden sense of powerlessness oppressed her. She was noted for what she termed frankness of speech and the courage of her convictions, but she had never met one whose rudeness and self-assurance excelled her own. At bottom Miss Sabina was founded on traditions of gentility. She ignored them in daily practise when ignoring suited her ends, but they had a way of asserting themselves on occasion. She was now abruptly permeated with inherited dignity. She drew herself up stiffly, at the same time reaching out for the shutters once more.

"I wish you a good-night, Miss Joyce," she said, so freezingly that Vanessa had the impression of a physical blow. As she spoke she hooked her shutters and moved away, leaving Vanessa master of the field, indeed, but with a curious indisposition to be satisfied with the victory, and with a sure conviction that her enemy had but changed the base of her operations.

V.

"If you mean to tell me, James," exclaimed Miss Sabina indignantly, taking up her key-basket and slipping its handle over her arm, "that you have allowed this young chit of a girl to gain such an influence over you in a few weeks that my counsels are set aside, after all these years of my devotion to your interests, and my feelings and sensibilities, to say nothing of my rights, outraged in the home of my fathers, I have nothing more to say. I shall be dumb. I am a lonely old woman. I was your father's sister." She placed the key-basket again upon the sideboard, and turned her attention for a moment to the coffee she was making at the little round table near the pantry-door. Miss Sabina always made the coffee herself. She held an unexpressed conviction that no one else in the world could.

Her elder nephew had little sense of humor, but he possessed an inexhaustible fund of self-control that ran all the way from sullen stubbornness to a persistent dogmatic quality that was invincible. As Miss Sabina herself had once told him in a moment of exasperation with this same quality, he came of good stock and was stocky. He now regarded her with a preternatural gravity in his pale-blue eyes, that had a way of hardening into the brittleness of porcelain.

"I should be very sorry to think that Miss Joyce had behaved unbecomingly to you, Aunt Sabina," he said, pompously serious.

"You should be, yes," returned his aunt, pouring in the coffee; "but you are not." Her usually steady hand shook so that she spilled some of the coffee upon the heated spirit-lamp. "I tell you," she cried, turning to him angrily, "the girl flouted her petticoats in my face. If her brazen determination which I overheard, and which I have repeated to you, does not affect you, that I am sure should. But there is a vast difference," she went on cuttingly, "between 'should' and 'does,' and the days of gallantry are passed."

"I shall speak to Miss Joyce," he returned, unmoved. "I hope you have been mistaken, Aunt Sabina."

Miss Sabina laughed. It was a peculiar laugh, with an indrawing of the breath at the end. It began by making you feel sorry for her; it ended by making you vaguely uneasy about yourself.

"Do so," she said, "if you wish to perform mental gymnastics around her fingers. She'll turn you inside out, and you'll never know it. Speak to her, by all means."

"I think you are unjust," he said stiffly.

"And I know I am not." She sat

down, defiant; it was as though she had raised her drawbridge. "Are you thinking of falling in love with her seriously?"

James' self-control came into play. There was a perceptible annoyance in his eyes, but he spoke with admirable evenness.

"The thought had not entered my mind, Aunt Sabina."

"Then I'm responsible for that. I've done that minx a service."

Miss Sabina rose quickly, as ending a useless discussion. She turned her back upon her nephew and her face to the coffee-table. She was really angry.

James stepped out on the broad veranda. The fresh beauty of the morning made an unusual appeal to him. His appreciation of the charms of nature was never very great, but this morning his emotions quickened strangely. He had never thought of falling in love with Vanessa, but he had done what was much more to the point —fallen in love without knowing it. Miss Sabina had simply opened his eyes to the fire already lit within.

James was surprised. He had honestly thought his heart buried with his wife. He thrilled to find that it was not, for he was young, and, though outwardly contained, the man of all men to need a wife. As for the accusation of Vanessa—he knew his aunt, and he did not know Vanessa. He only loved her freshly; a little wickedly; altogether delightfully. Thus the rejuvenescence of the earth, the bourgeoning of bush and flower, the passion of color, and the ecstasy of bird, had a meaning for him this morning. That meaning became dominating as Vanessa suddenly joined him in the checkered sunlight that sifted through the vines of Maréchal Niel roses festooning the veranda.

"Have I time for just a little walk before breakfast?" she questioned. "Did you hear the birds singing in the night? There was a mocking-bird outside my window that sang as though his heart would burst."

James inclined his head, his eyes taking in her dainty yet assertive charm. The gleam of her teeth and eyes fairly dazzled him. How exquisite she was! He followed her as she moved toward the steps. She was sure that Miss Sabina stood just within the bowed shutters.

"Since you have been here," he said, "the birds have sung only before your windows."

She made a gesture of caution.

"You should not be so flippant near your aunt," she laughed rebukingly, when they had reached the ground. "I fear she does not approve of me."

"My aunt is a little difficult at times," he admitted, not without a recollection of Miss Sabina's recent taunt about the mental gymnastics. "It is well to ignore her, if possible."

"We had a playful little conversation last night on the roof-top. It reminded me of the dramatis personæ of an operetta, and the setting was excellent. I fear, however, your aunt took it too seriously." There was a delicate uplifting of the heavy lashes in a half inquiry that completely established James in his conviction of his aunt's misconception of the girl beside him. He ignored the allusion to things theatrical with a mental wink at his churchly conscience.

"She has spoken to me about it. I think she slightly misunderstood your mood. I shall be glad to explain it to her."

"Oh, no! Never try to explain a mood." She threw out a deprecating hand.

"Then you will bear with my aunt?" He was solicitously earnest, not a whit confounded by this absolute spiking of his guns on his aunt's account.

"Your aunt interests me greatly," Vanessa replied, with a swift upward smile. "I feel quite satisfied now that you understand."

It was strange what an *entente cordiale* this skilfully managed probing had established between them. Vanessa was radiant. James looked down upon her, as she walked beside him, with a shortening of his breath that was a distinct poaching upon the preserves of his late wife. Somehow,

though he thought of this, he did not care.

"I am glad you are an early riser," he remarked. "I have little patience with those who lie abed late."

"I'm afraid I have," she laughed. "I do not like to take my new day as an unpleasant medicine."

"That is a strange thought. I have always risen early. Now; my brother never does."

"Your brother always looks to me as though he slept well. It is such a comfortable look. Not that I mean to say you look as though you did not. I wonder if you could pick that lovely little cluster of Banksias for me?"

He did so, bringing down upon her amber hair a shower of dewdrops.

"How good it must be to be tall!" She took the flowers from him, not meeting his eyes, and, therefore, making him wish she had. She laid the creamy sweetness of the flowers against her lips.

"You do not know," he said, a little precipitately for him, "how it pleases me to see you among the flowers of my garden."

"What a pretty speech! You Southern men flatter so charmingly. It is well you have the reputation for it, or there might be broken hearts to your account."

He felt the coquetry like a subtle incense upon the fire of his growing passion. Under his repression there stirred impulses which he had hardly known in the placid course of his first wooing. He was horrified at a prompting so fierce that it left him trembling to seize her to him and tell her of his love. He might even have done so, had Vanessa not turned from him at that moment at the sound of a shutter being thrown back, and waved her hand to Bobbie as he stood framed in his window. He nodded to her gleefully and disappeared.

"I could love your brother," she observed frankly. "He is such a big, clean, wholesome boy."

James drew ashes of disapproval over the flame of his passion. He never had loved Bobbie, and did so less than ever now, but he was silent.

"Of course," Vanessa went on, enjoying his chill, though not appreciating his self-denying silence, "I know he is not a boy, though I think he is of the kind that never grow old. I am going to give you this pink for a boutonnière, and this one I shall give him."

"You are so sure he is coming, then?" James could not resist this cry of his jealousy.

"Aren't you? See"—as the gate clicked. "There is nothing easier than to foretell some things." She smiled with captivating appeal.

Bobbie, in a white flannel-suit, which made him look bigger than he really was, and accentuated his good looks, bore down upon them.

"The old girl is eating her breakfast alone, mad as a setting-hen," he remarked genially.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Vanessa. "It's all my fault. Here, you must take her a peace-offering." She put the Banksias in Bobbie's big, firm fingers. "Drop them over her shoulder with a pretty speech."

"Good Lord!" said Bobbie, "I couldn't do it. She'll know it's a put-up game. Sabina's sharp."

James had stalked away at his brother's first words, and Vanessa seized her opportunity.

"We paid each other compliments last night after the world and his wife were asleep," she said. "She is very angry with me."

Bobbie was all interest. Vanessa, putting the carnation in his buttonhole, drew him down toward her that she might do so the more easily.

"She overheard me at my confessional," she continued, adjusting the stem of the flower. "I think your aunt has rather a penchant for overhearing things."

"You shouldn't talk to yourself. It's the sign of a full heart."

"Or an empty head, I have always heard."

"I should have liked to hear your confession." They were walking rath-

er leisurely toward the house, Bobbie close to Vanessa, that they might both escape the wetness of the overgrown box borders, though the path itself was generous. At his words, so incongruous were they to the truth, Vanessa paused, and darted a glance to his face. Bobbie's foolish heart jumped.

"You wouldn't," she said, rather gravely. "And if your aunt tries to tell you, promise me you won't let her."

"I promise. I'd promise you anything."

Her hand brushed his, and she gave it a little pressure. For the rest of the way to the house the ground rose up to meet Bobbie's steps.

When, a few hours later, Miss Sabina essayed to open her younger nephew's eyes she fared badly. James had ridden out to the fields; Vanessa was with the boy up-stairs; Miss Sabina and Bobbie were alone in the library. The lady was not a skilful tactician, and she scorned what she called "beating about the bush." She, therefore, began abruptly. Bobbie was immersed in the pages of a book, which, as Miss Sabina knew from a cursory peep, had some very questionable illustrations, at least.

"Of course you will tell me it is not any of your concern," she said, breaking a long silence, "but I wish to let you know something I overheard this Joyce girl saying to the stars last night."

Bobbie dropped his De Maupassant.

"I shall tell you before you go any farther, that it is not of any interest to me. You have always had a curious knack, Aunt Sabina, of overhearing what was not meant for you, and of repeating what was not meant for your auditor."

"This certainly was not," she returned, unabashed. "The girl is determined to marry either you or your brother, or Jack Rutledge."

"I hope it's I," Bobbie said sincerely.

"So do the others. She has bewitched the lot of you."

"I guess you are about right." The thought of James' infatuation, however, was exceedingly unpalatable to Bobbie. He was willing to run neck-and-neck with Rutledge, but James was another kind. His usually sweet temper became suddenly ruffled, but he recognized a possible justification for his aunt's attitude, at least in so far as James was concerned.

"It would, of course, be too much to expect," Miss Sabina observed, with caustic calm, "that you would believe the girl to have no preference for any of you, individually. For myself, I have no objection to her marrying young Rutledge, if he's fool enough to want her."

Bobbie's good nature returned for the moment. He felt a quick pity for his aunt's soured milk of human kindness.

"Forget it, Aunt Sabina," he counseled, lighting a cigarette. "Cut it out."

There were many things that Miss Sabina disliked more than others—among them were the smell of tobacco, the use of slang, and anything that favored of patronage. The muscles of her face fell into rigid lines.

"You were always an exceedingly rude young man, Robert!" she exclaimed, her voice shaking with ill-suppressed anger. "You deserve no better fate than you would get if this blondined vixen let her choice rest on you. I have nothing to lose, whichever way the beam falls. I am entirely disinterested. Both you and your brother have seen fit to insult me, but, as I told this girl last night, that one of you which she ropes in gets not a cent from me. I guess that cuts you out, for James has his wife's fortune besides his own."

Bobbie was very white, and his lips seemed to tremble. He sat up squarely in his chair, his hands on his knees.

"You told her that?" he said incredulously.

Miss Sabina nodded. She was really frightened, though she met his angry glance bravely.

Bobbie's oath was not nice. He hesitated a minute after it, forcing himself to remember that, although his aunt had baited him all his life, she was his

father's sister, and, by accident of birth, a lady. Then he rose to his feet.

"I shall think twice now, Aunt Sabina," he said, with hot scorn, "before I ask Miss Joyce to honor me by marrying into a family that you disgrace in such an unwarranted manner."

Miss Sabina's mouth was wide open as he turned and left the room.

VI.

"Miss Bess," said the little old negress, breaking her purple calico skirt with the low dip of her morning courtesy, "Mas' Jack tole me tuh tell yuh he done took his breakfas' en' gone fur er mawnin' ride."

"What is that, Aunt Easter?" Bess, rearranging the silver on the tray at her place at the table, paused, and turned to the old woman. The message was repeated letter for letter.

"Did Mr. Jack seem quite well?"

"He ain't never looked more perter, Miss Bess, though he ain't tek natural tuh gettin' up early, dat's sho'. P'raps it's jes some er dis yere spring feelin' en he blood. 'Tain't gwine hurt none; en she's sho' pretty, Miss Bess."

Bess turned at the sound of her husband's footsteps. "What do you think of it?" she asked him.

"That for a bright woman you have some very obscure moments if you cannot see for yourself," he replied, kissing her.

"I am not asking you for enlightenment," she laughed. "Of course I know it's 'the spring feelin',' as Easter says, but what are we going to do about it? I do wish there wasn't so much of this same 'feelin'' about loose."

"There will be, my dear, as long as God makes such temptations as you—and a few others."

"When you call me 'my dear,'" she rejoined, "it is the 'few others' that I must be after thinking about. 'My dear' attached by a husband to his wife is merely a shelf-mark."

"The shelf that I shall put you upon is built upon my heart."

"Suppose Jack should really be in love, Trezivant," Bess said, over their coffee and muffins. "You see, I brought them together. In fact, I urged and plead with Jack to go and call on Bobbie, holding out the governess as an inducement. I doubt if he has drawn a regular breath since. Of course he has ridden out this morning to join her. You know Bobbie has gone to his own place since he gave Sabina a piece of his mind. It isn't really habitable, and he came down here only for a week, but nothing counts to a man in that state. Sabina was over here yesterday, and says James Winthrop is renewing his youth and all its foolishness. And now it has spread here to Jack!"

"She isn't altogether a bad sort, is she?"

"She'll do for James, well enough. I'm thinking of Jack and Bobbie, both of 'em nice boys."

"There's one consideration," Grimké observed judicially, "that you seem to overlook. The girl can't marry all three of them."

"No, but she can make fools of them all, and Jack is remarkably ugly when he is unhappy."

Grimké set down his coffee-cup exactly.

"Would you very much object to having Miss Joyce for your sister-in-law?" he asked.

Bess pondered.

"She is really very pretty—lovely, indeed," she said; "and that peculiarly fetching amber hair is all her own, though Sabina swears it isn't—but *she* doesn't know blondine from walnut stain. The girl says she has no connections. That sounds suspicious—like a cook with no family, you know. Still, if Jack actually married her, I can't say she wouldn't look the part all right; and she's no fool."

"So, altogether, you wouldn't disown her. Now, I think, Bess, Jack might go farther and fare worse. I like the girl. Suppose you don't meddle."

"Oh!" cried his wife alertly; "she's tarred you, too!"

A few minutes later she joined him on the veranda. She had attended to

several things in the meantime, but held fast through all to the subject in hand.

"I don't care, then, if the whole quartet goes crashing down into the sea, pearls and swine together—or devils, rather—but I shan't be a wireless telegraph-machine between them. After all, our family needs some new blood in it, and Jack is a good one to make the blend. Bobbie, too, is safe and sturdy. James couldn't raise anything but Winthrop traditions, even if he married a bearded lady. That's my platform, then, while yours is—you like the girl."

Grimké looked up from his paper of the day before. He smiled.

"Don't trouble your restless head about the future generations. Miss Joyce is hardly indicative of the aspirations of motherhood."

"But children have a way of inviting themselves, all the same."

She left him then, going out into her garden. Her husband watched her moving about among the roses and lilacs, tall and stately in her simple gown of white. "There be women and women," he thought, "and amber hair and other hair, and a man may look, and admire, and dream a little, but, like water to the thirsty, there is but one woman to the one man, after all." And he went back to his paper with the sweetness of the morning close about his heart.

In the meantime, Vanessa and Rutledge were walking slowly through the moisture-scented woods. He had ridden forth to meet her. She did not ride herself, but she took early walks with her pupil along the main road. There was always the little boy; sometimes there was James; oftener there had been Bobbie. To-day Rutledge had found her alone with the child. He had sprung from his horse, eliminated the child by putting him in the saddle, and, with the bridle over his arm, walked beside Vanessa.

"Two things I know nothing of," she frankly confessed, admiring it in him that he did—"horses and children."

"Yet you teach children."

"I make them follow me," she laughed. "Of course I can tell them things, but if they did not choose to learn, I could not make them."

"Like the proverb of the horse and the water," he agreed. "But, do you know, I can't conceive of anything you could not do?"

"Nonsense! I frequently can't choose between yes or no, and I can't ride a horse." She put out her ungloved hand and rested it upon the animal's nose. "But I am going to learn."

"To say yes?"

"To ride. I am just a little bit afraid."

"I suppose Winthrop is going to teach you?"

"Who else? You may ride with me, though, when I have learned."

Rather moodily, he said nothing. Vanessa addressed herself to the landscape. The sandy road was running just then through a clearing, beyond which, at the edge of the pine-woods, nestled a negro's cabin. There was an old man chopping wood at the side of the house, and the clear strokes smote double upon the morning air. A yellow cur sidled diffidently toward them, sniffing and whimpering.

Rutledge watched the girl with a quickening of his pulses that sent hot waves of blood to the roots of his hair. The vivid sunlight accentuated his pronounced blondness. In the strong effort he put upon himself not to say the words he was afraid to say, he spoke a subconscious thought unwittingly.

"I wish you would let me teach you, instead. Why must I always be kept beyond the pale of your grace?"

"Are you?" Over her face there rippled a well-feigned surprise. "I should not have thought that," she murmured.

"You see, I want so much. I fear nothing but the all will satisfy me. You think"—his passion leaping bounds—"that because I have this infernal tow-head that I am as cold as a day-dawn in winter. Look at that." He held out his arm, which was quivering with the intensity of his feeling.

Vanessa was somewhat startled.

This was worse than Bobbie, and, moreover, of doubtful significance. She resented it as she would the receipt of spurious coin.

"You forget the child," she said, suddenly remembering him herself.

"He will not understand. Do you?"

She was silent. She was not sure that she did. Was this an impassioned proposal of marriage, or merely a declaration of what she knew already, that this man loved her, or fancied that he did? It behooved her, she thought, to be wary.

"Tell me what it is," she asked, with captivating ingenuousness, "that makes those little huts have such an atmosphere of comfort? There is nothing but boards and beaten dirt, and yet it is all so domestic."

He studied her attentively, coloring like a girl the while, and making no answer.

"I see I have omitted to note the chimney and its spiral of gray smoke, badges of domesticity, and I suppose, in this case, hoe-cake and bacon."

"What is domesticity to you?" he said, bruskly accusing. Vanessa stiffened as though by an electric shock. Up to this moment she had thought him as kindly as infatuated. She recognized with a swift readjustment of her preconceived opinions that did full credit to her own mentality that here was a man whose love and hate lay touching. It was with something of an effort that she held back certain caustic words that occurred to her in return.

"What could a man say to a woman that would humble her more than that she lacked the feminine capacity to make him happy?" There was a world of mingled reproach and humiliation in her eyes as they met his in the quick glance she bestowed upon him. After that there was a glint of amusement in them that Rutledge did not see.

"That is the last thing I should ever say of you! Do you imagine there is any doubt in my mind that you could make me madly happy?"

She played him yet farther.

"The last thing—perhaps, but as a last thing you are able to feel that I am not—not comfortably companionable. Isn't that so?"

"If you mean that my fancy has not yet painted you in black silk mitts seated by the winter's fire with your knitting, while I dozed in the opposite chair, I admit myself to be at fault."

"You are a cynical man almost against your will," she said, smiling thoughtfully. "We should fight like cat and dog over that imaginary fireplace, which you, not I, please notice, turn into ridicule."

"Only because it's imaginary."

She raised her eyes from the ground at the sound of the clatter of a horse's hoofs ahead. Bobbie on his big bay was sweeping down upon them. Vanessa uttered a glad little exclamation. Rutledge was palpably disconcerted.

"You and Mr. Winthrop have been lifelong friends," she affirmed, rather than questioned.

"We have seen little of each other in recent years—until now." There was a plain implication that now they saw too much of each other.

"I think more and more of him the better I know him. Don't you?"

"I have thought a great deal of him recently," he admitted. So fair a man could not look dark, but Rutledge's face had flushed thickly. Vanessa, seeing it, felt that she had balanced her account with him for the time being.

The next moment she was giving Bobbie her hand. The men quite overlooked greeting each other. That is, Bobbie forgot, and remembered. He put his hand on Rutledge's shoulder. He had already, and without attempt at disguise, turned about, and, leading his horse, walked on with them in the direction he had just come.

"Were you going far?" Vanessa asked, seemingly unconscious of any awkwardness in their meeting.

"As far as was necessary," he replied, with meaning.

Rutledge turned, and lifted Clare from the saddle of his horse to that of Bobbie's. "It is time for me to be going back," he said, purposely ungracious. No one was better bred than he when he chose, but the passion of

love was playing strange tricks with him.

Vanessa regarded him with genuine concern. For an instant her eyes sought Bobbie's. In their clear depths was such an abounding delight in the mere fact of living that she chose her course quickly, sure that no faith in him would be misplaced. She touched Rutledge on his arm.

"Wait. I must go back also, or I shall be late for breakfast and incur a just rebuke." She smiled at Bobbie. "You will come with us to the big gate."

She was proud of her escort, as any woman might have been. Put to it to choose between them on the score of good looks, she would have been at a loss. There could be no doubt, however, of Bobbie's superior good humor. He dropped behind now, talking to his nephew, but he watched Vanessa and Rutledge closely. He felt a trifle sore toward his old friend—not that he should admire Vanessa, but that he should be so patently disloyal to him. He was a little bit uneasy, too, at he knew not what, in Vanessa herself.

She left them at the entrance-gate, and the two men with their horses stood watching her in silence. It was Rutledge who finally spoke.

"There is no sense in going around with sore heads, as we are doing. We both love the same woman, and I, at least, intend to make her love me."

Bobbie lost every vestige of boyishness. He stood by his horse, not trusting himself to speak. Rutledge went on:

"We are no better than the beasts when it comes to the primal instinct of love. That's a thing the best of men won't go shares on with the best of their friends. One of us is going to come out ahead of the other, Bobbie."

There was a threat in the words, but Bobbie, with a straining of his patience, let it fall. He crossed his legs and leaned against his horse.

"Which one is it to be?" Rutledge asked, openly defiant.

Bobbie spoke softly. One arm lay along his horse's neck, the other was thrown over the animal's flank. The pose outlined the fine proportions of the man.

"That is for Miss Joyce to say."

"Then the race is on between us?"

Bobbie's blood stirred and leaped.

"What the devil is the matter with you?" he asked. "You talk and act as though I were a thief. The race, as you call it, is at least a fair one, and"—he went on slowly and with some effort—"we are old friends, Jack."

"That's all true enough, but when two men love the same woman, there is little room left for the exercise of friendship."

"I am sure," said Bobbie, his lips tightening, "that the two men need not concern themselves with anything more than finding out which one the woman prefers—if either."

"Ah!" exclaimed Rutledge, with prompt suspicion. "You also distrust her, then?"

Bobbie stood erect, wide-eyed, with an unconscious interrogation.

"I have suspected that she doesn't care for either—perhaps because the other was near at hand," Rutledge said, unwillingly enough. He was in no mood for explanations, even when they could be construed to convey a reproach. Bobbie spoke, ominously calm.

"That is at least her privilege."

"Provided she is square."

"Jack"—Bobbie was trembling like a woman—"I don't know whether you intend to insult me or her—the woman you say you love. Don't make me sure."

Rutledge smiled. There was that about his smile like the markings of his face, something fine but cruel. Further than to smile he did not answer.

Bobbie's anger passed. The preponderance of their friendship had always been on his side.

"You're a lobster," he said emphatically, slapping Rutledge on the shoulder. "What rot it is for us to quarrel! Come on back to my shack. It isn't half bad there now since I've ousted the ghosts."

Rutledge did not budge.

"Thanks," he replied coldly, "but

really I don't feel like going." He hesitated. "I'm in dead earnest about this thing, Bobbie. Which is it to be? You or me?"

Bobbie, with one foot already in the stirrup, slipped it out and turned quickly.

"What in God's name do you take me for?" he cried. "Do you think I'm not in earnest, too?"

Rutledge's blue eyes flamed.

"Do you intend to marry her?"

"I intend to ask her to be my wife, yes!" thundered Bobbie, quivering. "And you?"

"Wait and see," Rutledge muttered, with an oath, swinging up on his horse.

VII.

"Always try to make people believe that you are good, Clare. That is aspiration. Inspiration is finding out the best way to do it. You see," went on Vanessa, turning down upon her knee the book she had been hearing the boy recite from, and continuing her Socratean method, more for her own satisfaction than the child's, "the people in the world are so bad, generally, that to make them think good of you, you have to try so hard to imitate goodness that there is no chance for you to be bad."

"I don't understand," said the boy.

"It's this way, dear." Vanessa reached above her head in the arbor where they were sitting, and drew down a spray of yellow jessamine, breaking it off and twining it into a circle. The garden about them lay very still, breathing many perfumes. "Suppose I was trying very hard to make your father and your Uncle Bobbie and Mr. Rutledge think I was all each one of them would have me. Don't you see how good I'd have to be?"

"But you said people were bad," puzzled Clare. Vanessa dropped her eyes to his upturned ones sharply.

"You're your dear father's own begotten," she said musingly. "You must try not to get things mixed, dear, and, remember, you must never repeat anything I say to you in our little talks—unless I say you may."

"But papa comes to me every night after I'm in bed, and asks me what you've said to me all day."

Vanessa closed her eyes.

"Yes, dear. And what did you tell him last night?"

"That you said he would make women very happy."

"A woman, I said, but don't repeat that again, dear; understand?"

"He kissed me and gave me a dime," said the child demurely.

Vanessa looked scrutinizingly at the puzzled face. "I'll tell you something else nice to say to-night."

"Something that will make papa give me another dime?"

"Maybe; but you must not be grasping. A good deed is often its own reward."

The child's face fell. He had been raised on that doctrine by Miss Sabina, and could supply the reverse of the medal. Vanessa herself sighed doubtfully.

The way before her did not seem so clear as she might wish. Her reason was unsatisfied, and a curious unrest had come upon her. If she could not lay claim to any decided, preponderating preference, there was, at least, in the case of all of her incipient suitors something at which she rebelled. She was provoked with herself for having such squeamish sensibilities. She could not understand why it was becoming harder each day for her to satisfy these men and herself.

"Don't you want to play about awhile, Clare?" she asked. "Don't go out of the garden, though." She called softly to the child as he moved away down the shady path: "If you hear your Aunt Sabina about, be sure to come quickly back to me."

When the shrubbery had hidden him from view, Vanessa put aside the book from her lap, and changed her seat into deeper shade. The days were becoming warm with the passing of the spring.

The friction between Rutledge and Bobbie was disturbing her. What another woman would have welcomed in

it as a tribute to herself, Vanessa deplored as an influence tending to constrain her management of her own affairs. There were *pros* and *cons* in every direction to be considered carefully, and she did not wish her decision to be hurried by an unreasoning impetuosity of passion which she did not share. She laughed at the ridiculousness of love, but she had seen enough of it to fear its blind force, and her instinct told her that none of the three men now about her was a dull-edged tool. There had been an undercurrent of tragedy in the bearing of the two men that morning which made her more and more uncomfortable in mind as she recalled it. She sighed again, and shut her eyes. The hour was so languorous, and so filled with the monotones of silence! When, now and then, a brilliant cardinal-bird whistled his few notes, they ran through the hushed day as richly as his blaze of plumage stabbed the dark green of the cedars. It was the brooding time of the year, with the gorgeousness of love's passion not yet dimmed in leaf or flower. Vanessa, wearied with her thoughts, dozed.

She started as Bobbie's body came between her and the light.

"How did you get here?" she asked. She had been asleep just long enough to be confused and a trifle irritable.

"Through the woods. No one knows I am here. I dodged the house."

"But you found me! How did you know where I was?"

"I didn't. It was the north star and the needle, the magnet and the steel, the woman and the man—*you* and *me*."

"No woman likes to be caught napping, even the least sentimental," she replied. He was still standing before her, and she did not tell him to sit down. Her eyes fastened on the buckle of his belt. Bobbie grew nervous, shifted his position, and then spoke impetuously what he had come to say.

"Vanessa, I came because I couldn't stay away from you, and I am not going to go away until you tell me I can stay—forever."

She was vexed that he should take her thus by storm, but her heart beat in a manner that sent the warm blood to her cheeks.

"And I suppose the moment I told you that you could stay—forever, you'd be as impatient to leave at once. You're a man."

"Try me."

"I haven't the slightest desire to stay anywhere forever, or with any one. I like change and variety."

"So do I. We could live in New York in the winter, and down here in the spring, and somewhere else in the summer."

"And your profession?" she asked him, practical in a moment.

"Is established. Am I not away from it now?"

"You mean it is so—so big—that it goes on of its own momentum?"

Bobbie nodded.

"Suppose it stopped?" she hazarded, meeting his eyes squarely.

Bobbie's answer surprised her. Reaching down, he drew her up to him, keeping his arms about her.

"Now that you have inquired into my private means," he said, laughing, "won't you come and preside over them?"

"I don't know whether I will or not, but holding me this way isn't going to make me decide any quicker."

"Why?"

"I didn't want you to ask me so soon. Didn't I make that plain?"

"Perfectly, you witch. But didn't I make it just as plain that I would do it the moment I could? It's been trembling on my lips for ages."

"Bobbie," she said, with such honesty of purpose that her smile fled, "you would make a very masterful husband, and I really don't know whether I want you or not. It is very strange, too."

"What is strange?"

"Myself."

His hold upon her tightened, so that she threw back her head to meet his eyes.

"It isn't that you care for any other?"

Vanessa groaned.

"I had thought you original, at least,"

she murmured. "I believe Adam is the only man who never asked that question."

"Do you love me?"

"Doesn't this look something like it?"

Bobbie rather lost his head at that, but Vanessa kept an eye on the garden as well as she could. Finally she said:

"Suppose your brother should hear of his son's governess being in your arms—and your little nephew is somewhere about, too."

Bobbie frowned at the reference to James.

"Let us sit down and talk, then," he advanced. "I want you to go back with me when I leave next week."

"What!" she cried. "You must be crazy." She motioned him to a seat opposite her, but he deliberately disobeyed.

"Why not? You have told me you are alone in the world, and there are good reasons why I should not leave you down here."

"Such as?" Her teeth gleamed as she smiled up at him.

"I shall not gratify your vanity. When you are my wife I'll tell you how mortally afraid I was to let another man look at you."

"When I am your wife! And when is that to be?"

"We are going to settle that now."

Vanessa drew away from him.

"But I do not love you," she said, opening her hands conclusively. She wondered what it was that made her say it.

"That's all right," smiled Bobbie. "It looked something like it just now. You admitted so much yourself."

Vanessa, fairly caught in her own toils, had the grace to blush. She looked so lovely that Bobbie did it all over again.

"Do you know," he said, "that I came over here with my heart alternately in my mouth and in my boots? I thought it was going to be awfully hard to tell you without making a fool of myself, but, after all, things just took care of themselves. I suppose it's always so when a fellow strikes the woman really meant for him."

Vanessa looked upon him wonderingly. Here was the sane mind in the sound body to perfection, and yet what rubbish he talked, and how little he knew! A swift sense of compunction made her lower her eyes.

"Do you really think I am meant for you, Bobbie?" she asked, as she might have asked a child, but Bobbie's answer was not a child's, and Vanessa did not repeat her question.

It was Miss Sabina herself who came upon them. Miss Sabina always wore cloth shoes without heels, and she took pride in her noiseless step. She might just have come, or she might have been standing there for some minutes, when Vanessa all at once became aware of her presence. Miss Sabina entered the arbor.

"Good morning, Robert," she said, with her pale smile. "Miss Joyce seems to have more to teach you than she has to teach her nominal pupil. Where is my young nephew, Miss Joyce?"

"Aunt Sabina," Bobbie began, "Miss Joyce——" but Vanessa cut across his speech by word and gesture.

"Clare is there behind you, Miss Sabina. We suspected you might be somewhere about—this old garden is so filled with nooks and corners—and he has a flower for you."

Miss Sabina laughed, but she took the damaged hyacinth that Clare extended to her in quick compliance with Vanessa's hint.

"You are better taught than I had expected, child," she cuttingly remarked. "Between your fool of a father and your teacher I have fine hopes of you, and"—she confronted Bobbie—"of the family *I* disgrace."

VIII.

When Bess saw her brother start off that afternoon in his runabout she did not have to be told that he was going to turn it in the direction of the Winthrop place, and ask Vanessa to go with him for a ride.

"Twice in one day," she observed to

her husband, who was lying in the hammock. "It's too bad he and Bobbie have pitched on the same field, and are at odds already. I wonder if Bobbie really cares?"

"Good heavens, Bess, don't mix yourself up in the thing!" Grimké returned irritably—Rutledge had roused him from a nap by the choo-chooing of his runabout. "Let them fight it out alone."

Bess went into the house. Twenty minutes later she rode on her horse past her sleeping husband's nose, and then in a quick canter through the woods to the main road. As she struck it, her brother, with Vanessa beside him, whirled by in the other direction. There was only chance for a quick nod of recognition.

Bobbie was under the big oaks before his house, playing with two fine setters. He turned joyously to greet Bess, rolling down the sleeves of his shirt over bronzed arms, and reaching out for his coat.

"Never mind your clothes," she called. "Or, rather, get out of them and into your riding-togs, and join me in a ride to the river. I want to talk with you, and it isn't proper for me to stop here. How did you ever get the old wreck to look so comfortable?"

"The house? Just by the sunshine of my personality."

"You do look happy. What is it?" but she guessed that Vanessa must have been bestowing her smiles upon him.

"Wait until I get my legs into some boots and I'll tell you." He darted into the house, followed by the dogs, unceremoniously leaving Bess seated on her horse. She heard him shouting orders from a rear window to the stables. By the time he rejoined her they had brought up his horse.

The old place had been lived on at one time by Bobbie's father before he had come into the large plantation adjoining. The house had been half destroyed by fire, and since was used only as occasion might demand for picnic or hunting party.

"What a pity you can't make a home of it, Bobbie!" Bess said, as they rode off.

"Why can't I?" he asked gaily, turning in the saddle, and leaning toward her.

"Out with it. You have some plan. And then I'll tell you my errand."

Bobbie became at once self-conscious. It was not so easy to find the right words.

"I am thinking of making a home of the old place. I was talking about it this morning with Miss Joyce." The words did not enlighten, but something about Bobbie's glance did. Bess squared herself in the saddle, a sense of disaster impending.

"You don't mean you talked with her about making it a home with her?" she said, carefully accentuating the prepositions.

"Sure!"

"Now, why did you do that? Do you mean you have asked Miss Joyce to marry you, and that she has consented?"

Bobbie's face fell suddenly. She had not consented, come to think about it. And his infernal old aunt had pushed herself in before he could make her, and had held her ground until the dinner-bell rang. Bobbie smiled seraphically, however, at the remembrance of what he had done instead of getting Vanessa's verbal assent. Surely otherwise she had assented. Bess was regarding him severely.

"I know the thought of her is delicious to you," she said caustically, "but do you realize that Jack is also smitten? It's about Jack that I've come to talk with you."

"He'll have to withdraw his stakes and survey elsewhere, Bess. I'm sorry, but, to be honest with you, Jack's inclined to be ugly about it."

She nodded. She knew her brother. "Answer my question," she said.

"About Jack? Yes, of course; I know he thinks he cares."

Bess did not argue that point. "He's gone riding with her this afternoon," she told him, and noted how his brow clouded. "My question about Miss Joyce," she added.

"I have asked her to marry me, Bess."

She moved her head encouragingly. Her face had become grave.

"As it so happens, she did not actually say yes," Bobbie went on reluctantly, under influence of the encouragement, "but I have every reason to think she means it."

"Jack thinks the same about himself," she observed, her brows drawn also.

"Impossible!" He remembered the morning.

"My dear Bobbie, don't you know that nothing is impossible to the egotism of the man in love?"

"I suppose a dozen fellows can care for a girl and all be sure she cares for them, but when one gets in ahead the others drop out, Bess, if they are square."

It was hard for her, but Jack was her brother, and this big Bobbie had always been almost a brother. And Vanessa had not yet said yes!

"It must be made very plain to the other fellows, Bobbie—I mean by the girl."

Bobbie's lips became dry all of a sudden.

"If you mean to disparage Miss Joyce, Bess, I can't discuss her in that way, even with you. And I am perfectly satisfied with Miss Joyce's treatment of me."

"All right," Bess said, more lightly. "Maybe she is telling Jack right now. If she isn't, I'm sure he is telling her."

There came a silence. With the best intentions in the world, each felt a rub. Moreover, in spite of his brave words, Bobbie was ill at ease, while Bess, though liking Vanessa well enough, felt sure of her coquetry, a coquetry the more dangerous, she told herself, in that it was entirely of the head. Her husband had been right, however. She should not have mixed herself up with the thing at all.

Vanessa was thinking she had made a mistake to join Rutledge on his ride. In her scheme for securing a husband she had entirely left out of consideration the possibility of passion playing a dominant part in the game; so dominant that she, the object of it, was caught up in its vortex and carried away from her sure premises. She could have managed a comfortably amorous man. The passion of Bobbie's wooing had taken her breath away. The vehemence of Rutledge, tempestuous and unrestrained, was frightening her beyond the point where fear was a pleasurable excitement. Twice he had stopped the machine in deserted portions of the road, taken her in his arms, and burnt his kisses upon her lips. Being treated so, she had been very angry. She told herself that she could not justly blame him, for it was her own indecision at his wooing that gave him boldness; yet blame him she did, and the more inasmuch as she saw that there was no penitence in his manner.

They were returning, and the twilight held the earth. It was dank and chill as the shelving road ran through the noiseless woods, and Vanessa, with city-bred unaccustomedness to the palpitant dusk, unconsciously drew closer to her companion. He turned the lever of the engine to slower speed, and his arm stole about her.

"If you stop this machine in this horrible dark place, I'll scream," she declared. "Don't tell me that you love me any more to-night. Get me to the house."

"But I do—more and more each hour, and the more you struggle against me, and the more determined you are to keep me on tenterhooks, so much the more will my love burn for you, Vanessa."

"I shall jump if you stop. I swear I shall."

"These woods are haunted," he assured her grimly.

"At any rate, there won't be any lovemaking in them." She laughed, nervous and hysterical.

"Are you so unresponsive to Winthrop?" he asked.

Vanessa's face glowed.

"He would not treat me as you have done, at least."

"He does not love you as I do."

She knew well it would anger him, but she did not care.

"You honor him by saying so."

He took his revenge in a way she had not expected. Seizing her face between his hands, he kissed her mouth for each word she had said.

It was just as he released her, choking with indignation, that Bobbie and Bess galloped by. That was the climax for Vanessa. She turned upon him fiercely.

"You have repeatedly insulted me tonight," she panted. "You ask me if I love you. I hate you. Oh, I know it sounds very futile, and it is! I'd like to return you some of your passion in blows. I'll never marry you, and if I did I'd never love you."

"Be quiet," he commanded, for she spoke loudly in her wrath. "They did not see us, but they may hear you if you scream."

"Oh!" she sobbed dryly, "if I could do something to punish you!"

She moved to the extremity of the seat, and nearly lost her balance in trying to avoid contact with his body. She was somewhat amazed at the sharp feeling of repugnance to him. It was like the swift turning of the stomach at overmuch wine. It did not leave her even after her head cleared.

Vanessa had, in fact, received a shock. The fire she had merely desired to be warmed luxuriously by had leaped up and scorched. She was neither a fish nor a fool. In return for that comfortable warmth she desired, she had expected, and was willing to give, a return. The experience of the day, however, had shown her where a woman stood with regard to the more elemental passions which she might fan to flame within a man. The knowledge was not flattering to her pride of self.

After supper she slipped out to the veranda. She did not look for Bobbie that evening; Rutledge she knew would not appear. She had sent him from her with anger at her disdain. If Bobbie had stayed at the Grimkés' for supper, she wondered what cheer there had been between the two men.

"To make the day's record complete," she sighed, sinking down into a low chair at a corner of the veranda far removed from the library, where Miss Sabina and her nephew read, "it only remains for James to offer himself. Thank heavens, he'll do it decorously, and by the book!"

It was as though she dreamed that after a time she found herself speculating, as the vast silences of the summer night were putting intangible distances between the present moment and anything that ever had happened, whether the events of the day had definitely eliminated Rutledge from her plans. Could she ever forgive him? Would any sane woman ever handicap her life by translating it into such a subjunctive mood as he would demand? A hot wave of self-contempt, born in some corner of her feminine nature, swept over her, and she closed her lips tight. But the questionings persisted. Had she been prudish? She abominated a prude. Even Miss Sabina called a spade a spade with an unsuborned relish. Then the mood passed as swiftly and mysteriously as it had come. She sat up, fastening her eyes upon the glowing sapphire of a star that was pendant over the tree-tops. She clenched her fingers upon the arms of her chair, and closed her teeth so hard that little darts of pain shot through her head. She would become a telephone girl, an office drudge, she would join the Salvation Army, before she would ever forgive him. And she did not have to become any of these things. With that she thought of Bobbie.

Of course he had gone off believing she had promised to marry him. She hadn't. Everything that had been done, he had done. She had merely not been prudish there. Bobbie was so comfortable, even when he bore you off your feet. He did not make one combative. And yet Bobbie, too, was very positive. He took entirely too much for granted. At this point of her meditations Vanessa uttered a quick scream, and fell into a whirlwind of rage.

"How horrid of you to creep up on me so, and lick my hand! I thought it a dog, or your aunt."

"Hush," whispered James. "Aunt Sabina fell into a doze, and I stole out to you. I kissed your hand."

"Don't ever do it again. I hate people who walk like cats. Your aunt always does."

James' tones expressed a delicate reproof as he asked her if she were not well.

"Sit down," ordered Vanessa, ignoring his question, "and please don't whisper. I am sure if people whisper over me when I am dead, it will make me get up and move off."

"It is not well to speak lightly of death."

"Perhaps not. You don't know any more about that than I do."

He was silent while a whippoorwill called rapidly, almost startlingly, from beyond the garden. It struck Vanessa that he was waiting, impatient but restrained, for the interruption to cease.

"I come to you in no arrogance of spirit, Vanessa," he said, when the cleft silence of the night had ceased to vibrate. "Indeed, I come very humbly, realizing the frailty of human nature, to crave a boon of you."

"Mr. Winthrop——" she exclaimed, but checked herself. It was very absurd for her to plead for a respite from what she had expected and imagined she desired. Nevertheless, she was trembling and nervous, sickeningly reluctant. It was very strange, she thought, that the matter-of-fact wooing of this man should flurry her.

"Call me 'Jim'!" she heard him saying, as though from beyond a high wall.

"But it doesn't fit you a bit," she demurred.

"Some names never fit. Now, there is Bobbie. Of course his real name is Robert, but no one but my aunt and I ever call him by it, and 'Bobbie,' a small boy's name, fits him as those little skull-caps he wears on the back of his head fit his body."

The touch of acid detraction in his tones stirred Vanessa's opposition. She breathed more easily.

"'Bobbie' suits him exactly—as well as those skull-caps. 'Robert' reminds me of a coachman, or a parson, at least."

With commendable restraint, James yielded the point.

"It was not Bobbie's name that I wished to discuss with you," he began.

"Then why do you do so? You chose the subject."

Perhaps it was her captiousness, perhaps it was the sudden lurching within his veins of the strong passions that lay under the reticence of his usual manner, but James Winthrop did a curious thing. He leaned over her, seizing her hands in his, and slid from his chair to his knees.

"Vanessa," he whispered, and the hoarseness of the whisper made Vanessa frown even at that moment, "I love you. You are unlike any woman I ever knew before. I cannot get you out of my mind, neither by day nor night. I want you to marry me, to be my wife."

Vanessa blanched. And people spoke of cold and passionless marriage! She struggled vainly to withdraw her hands. She heard the quick breathing of the man, whose face she could not see, but which was so near her own that she felt its warmth. Was it because she disliked the man that a swift loathing of herself rushed through her? She found herself listening to his words as one reviving from a faint hears the voices of those about him.

His first burst of passion spent, James fell back upon his self-control. He realized the disadvantages under which he wooed; had realized them before Vanessa's unyielding body reminded him of them in full force, and also of the vantage-grounds of his position which his passion had caused him to forget.

"I know," he said, "that other men may have some things to give you that I cannot offer, but I do not come empty-handed. I am not old, though I am no longer a flighty youth. I never was that," he amended truthfully. "But my love for you is as fervid as any man's, and the name I offer you is not a vain one, nor the worldly goods of which I am happily possessed incon-

siderable. I know this is a point remote from your interest, but I am a rich man, Vanessa, and, though you may be indifferent to wealth, the things that money may buy are not to be despised, under a due self-denial. I have observed your fidelity to the interests of my son, and I feel assured that you will make him a true mother. I should not ask you, though, to live here always. Any part of the world that tempted you would be our place of sojourn, until you wished to return here. However, I confess that it is the dream of you here by my fireside that is most pleasing to me, that makes me young, that sends new life along my veins."

The whippoorwill rather than want of words or breath made him pause. Vanessa was smiling queerly to herself. She had become quite self-possessed.

"And all that I ask in return," he filled in, after the echoes had subsided, "is yourself and your love."

She tried hard to read the expression on his face. It seemed to her incredible that he should be speaking in sober earnest. It was the touch of his arm stealing about her waist that made her say:

"Couldn't you do without that? I do not mean myself, of course, but the outward symbols. I was always very undemonstrative."

"But you do love me?" he asked, withdrawing his arm. His tone was not altogether free from a suggestion of accusation.

"Of course—Jim." She hesitated. It was by no means an artificial hesitation. She wished she could be honest with him about this love business. The affectation of it hung about her like fetters. "We must say nothing about this—about our engagement—just yet," she faltered.

"But why?" he naturally asked.

"Because."

How could she explain to him that the recollection that she had that day allowed both him and Bobbie to look upon her as engaged to them was causing her a trepidation as undesirable as it was unexpected? She gave a gasp of surprise as she felt James' lips bear down upon hers in the dark.

"I hope you won't do that again," she cried. "At any rate, not until I tell you to."

"But we are betrothed lovers," he affirmed, drawing her fetters tighter.

"I've heard it wasn't healthy. The Japanese never do."

"The Japanese are heathen," was his conclusive reply, pointed by another offense.

IX.

"And now say to me, if you can, Elizabeth," Miss Sabina triumphantly exclaimed the next day, crossing her feet upon a footstool and dropping back in her chair, "that she isn't the worst kind of an adventuress, even if her hair is all her own, as you insist upon."

"You are sure, Miss Sabina?" Bess' clear brow wore a puzzled look, and she was sitting with her hands in her lap perfectly idle—the sign with her of mental perturbation.

"Sure? Have you ever known my eyesight or my hearing impeached?"

"But might you not be in error?" persisted Bess, the more doggedly because in her heart she did not doubt at all.

Miss Sabina sat erect and regarded her hostess with an unveiled sneer.

"You know how I dislike going out in the morning," she observed steadily. "Do you think I would have come over here at this hour to narrate mistakes, or optical illusions, or tricks of ventriloquism? I tell you I saw that Joyce girl, whom you are so set on defending, in my younger nephew's arms yesterday morning—broad daylight, and well in them she was, too—and even were I sand blind or given to seeing mirages, my ears could still hear. And last night, although I could not see, for the piazza was dark, I heard. I was as close to them as I am to you. There's nothing else in this world that sounds like a kiss, that I know of. And she called him 'Jim.' Now, what do you say to a girl who is in two men's arms the same day?"

Bess said nothing. She thought, however, of a scene in the darkening woods the night before which she was now sure she had really detected and not suspected merely. She was silent for so long that Miss Sabina, taking it as an indication of her unwillingness to admit the overthrow of preconceived notions, became also embedded in a silence that grew out of stubbornness. At length Bess spoke, with evident reluctance. She did not like to substantiate Miss Sabina's palpably just condemnation of Vanessa by the force of her own opinion, but she was honest.

"I fear Miss Joyce is a temperamental flirt."

Miss Sabina fairly snorted.

"She's nothing of the kind! Temperamental! You are stupid, Elizabeth. The girl is a mere calculating machine. She has subtracted two from three, and got one. I hope she has got him—they each deserve it. I'll do her the justice to say, however, she has lost no time in working her sum."

"If what you say is so—" began Bess.

"Do you doubt my word or my senses?" asked Miss Sabina angrily.

"What you say being so," Bess amended, "I do not know that I am altogether sorry—or glad, either."

"That is precisely the impression your behavior conveys. I suppose you are sorry to see your brother escape the clutch of this vixen, and glad to see her turn me out of my lifelong home—for, of course, I shall not remain a day after that impudent baggage has the legal right to sit at the head of James Winthrop's table."

It was at this moment that Rutledge came out of the darkened drawing-room behind Miss Sabina, and went straight up to that lady. She turned to him with ready words, but they remained unspoken at sight of his face. His voice sounded to Bess portentously even.

"I have heard all you have said. At what hour was your nephew with Miss Joyce in the relations you have described?"

"Which nephew?" demanded Miss Sabina crisply.

"Jack!" cried his sister. She saw that he was white, and trembling under some powerful emotion. She half rose, starting to him. Miss Sabina waved her back.

"Keep your seat, Elizabeth. It is well that he should know the nature of the fire he has been playing with." She confronted Rutledge with her nervous laugh. "The two incidents I mentioned, with a change of cast as to the leading-man, were exactly twelve hours apart. Ten o'clock in the morning and ten o'clock at night." Suddenly she remembered Rutledge's ride with Vanessa in the afternoon, and she eyed him with renewed shrewdness. "There was full time for an intermediate performance, with still another cast."

Bess stirred uneasily. There was something appalling to her in the set whiteness of her brother's face. Miss Sabina's taunting, she felt intuitively, was the merest buzz of a gnat to him.

So Bobbie had deliberately gone behind his back after their words of the early morning, and pressed his wooing! No wonder that Vanessa had repulsed his own attentions. Her mind had, of course, been poisoned against him. She herself was not to blame, but against the man who had outplayed him, who had won where he had been disdained because of that winning—against this man Rutledge's hate and lacerated pride, his scorned passion and his jealousy, called aloud for primitive revenge.

He cared nothing for the fact that the two women were witnesses of the cold fury of rage that possessed him, that held him trembling as with a chill, but otherwise incapable of motion. No thought of James Winthrop entered his mind. His was not the jealousy of the man who loved, but of the man who had lost.

To shield him from the open-eyed amaze of Miss Sabina, Bess went and stood beside him. She knew him too well to speak to him, but her firm hand rested with an increasing pressure upon his shoulder. Finally the color came

back into his face, and he turned his eyes to hers.

"You had better go out on the piazza for awhile," she whispered, pushing him through the open doorway before he could answer. Once there, and beyond earshot of the hall, she spoke rather sharply.

"What did you mean by acting so before her? Don't you know that by night-time Tom, Dick, and Harry will have heard of your remarkable behavior?"

"They will have heard of more than that," he declared, releasing himself from her touch, "unless I become suddenly paralyzed."

"You may be if you continue to give way to such diabolical temper."

He laughed without mirth.

"Don't scold me, Bess," he said gravely. "I may need your own tried temper soon."

She looked at him attentively. He seemed to have calmed down. He appeared his usual coolly handsome self, except for the tense lines about his mouth. Bess, not deceived, spoke impulsively, her heart misgiving her.

"You are not going to see Bobbie while you are in this mood?"

"I am. The mood will not change —not until I see him."

"Jack! She isn't worth it."

"She has nothing to do with it," he answered coldly, "and, if you love me, Bess, you will not have, either."

He passed her at that, and went down the steps. He was already in his riding-suit, and he took up a cap that lay upon a chair near by, and walked quickly in the direction of the stables.

"Elizabeth," called Miss Sabina, "have you entirely forgotten that I came over here this morning?"

Bess turned with some of her brother's temper, and went indoors.

"I wish to heaven I could forget it," she exclaimed. "You have made a nice mess of things in your insatiable desire to manage other people's affairs. I hope the consequence of this morning's gossip will fall where it belongs." She did not sit down, but nervously arranged and disarranged the magazines and flowers upon the claw-footed table.

Miss Sabina rose with an admirable assumption of proud forbearance. She wore on her head a very wide-brimmed straw "flat," which she now tied down under her chin. It made her bear a superficial resemblance to an inverted basket. She smoothed her black silk mitts.

"I shan't return harsh words for your uncharitable wish, Elizabeth, and I overlook your inhospitality. I shall always be glad to have you at Keowee so long as I retain any authority there. I may, however, return now to find my belongings thrown out of the house. I seem to have outlived my welcome in this world."

Bess was of the opinion, just at that moment, that she had, but what she said was:

"I wish you would give Miss Joyce a message for me. Tell her I should be very glad to have her let me call for her this afternoon in my road-cart—about five."

"And pray, what in the world have you to say to her?" inquired Miss Sabina, resuming her chair, her dignity forgotten, and her going.

About the time that Miss Sabina was setting out that morning on her visit to Bess, Vanessa, taking the boy with her, had dodged James by forcing a way through the garden hedge. Cutting across the orchard beyond, she came into the heavy woods, from which the night seemed scarcely to have lifted its lingering shadow.

It had been an uncomfortable night for her, following a harassing day. The two facts taken together had put her out of temper.

She hated to bungle, and she told herself repeatedly now that she had bungled horribly. No woman not crassly tactless would have allowed three men, all of whom possessed qualifications deserving of careful consideration, to corner her one after another in one day's time with peremptory proposals of marriage. No woman meriting the dignity of having more than

one string to her bow would ever be so much the victim of circumstances as to be forced to discard one lover, and allow two with equal warrant to look upon her as their affianced wife. The very necessity of choice in her pronouns emphasized her bigamous stupidity.

Next to herself, she blamed Bobbie. She could not have said exactly why, but she did. It had been he who had broken the thin crust of restraint upon which she had held all three and so let the strong undercurrent of passion boil up through the opening. The more she thought of it all, the more she could trace the whole of her distraught yesterday and night to Bobbie's influence; for, notwithstanding his rupture of the growing suspense in which it had been her pleasure to hold him, Bobbie's conduct of the morning before had not displeased her. In fact, it had sent her with a silly radiance straight into the snare that Rutledge spread for her a few hours later, and that experience, in turn, had driven her with the resistlessness of fate into a more than passive furtherance of James' design. She had lost her head just at the crucial moment —a far more serious loss than one's heart, she was inclined to think.

In her preoccupation, Vanessa paid no heed whither she went. It was Clare who was the unrecognized pilot, Vanessa following afar off through the dim woods, over a footing of last year's leaves, pungently fragrant in their slow decay. The silence fell about her muffled; lifted now and then at the staccato strokes of a crimson-polled woodpecker, or the dry barking of a squirrel, inquisitive and alert. When she stopped, it was by a tiny spring whose waters were evidently levied upon by negroes from a cabin not far off. Vanessa sat down upon some large stones near a washtub full of indigo water.

"Don't stop here," called back the boy. "It's ugly."

"It's quite good enough," Vanessa returned. "Run on, dear, if you want to."

Left alone, she fell to thinking it all over again. And the more she thought, the more she detested the entire snarl. If Bobbie only had his brother's wealth; if James only had his brother's youth and lusty manhood; if the other man —but Vanessa checked thought of Rutledge. If she only saw her way what to do—for whatever she did now was going to make matters worse. It vexed her that she should jump as Bobbie's voice spoke just behind her. She had not heard his approach over the soft soil.

"I knew I was thirsty," he said, holding out a hand, "but how thirsty not until I saw you."

"I am not in the slightest degree sentimental this morning." Vanessa looked up at him unflinchingly, despite the fact that he stood over her and she had to throw her head back uncomfortably to do so. "Can't you sit down?" she asked, ungraciously enough. "It gives me a crick in my neck to look up at you."

"If you'll let me have half of those stones."

"Then you will continue to stand." It was beginning to look as though she would prove unrelievedly disagreeable.

"Not much," laughed Bobbie. He sat down beside her, his head coming dangerously close to hers as the stones raised her to his level. "Kiss me, Vanessa."

"Eh!" she cried, in genuine surprise. Then, entirely without knowing that she was going to do it, she colored vividly. It made her adorable, and Bobbie speedily changed the mood and tense of his demand. Vanessa vindicated her claim to originality by keeping silent, and Bobbie his appreciation of the fact. A swift twinkle of mirth lit her eyes, dissipating her bad humor.

"But you really mustn't."

"Of course not," assented Bobbie verbally.

"Your brother wouldn't like it," she laughed, a little brokenly, but with impish daring.

"Of course not. Who would? It would be deuced hard on any fellow."

Vanessa was silent, considering. It suddenly occurred to her that she was

not angry with Bobbie. She had been very angry with Rutledge. She had such a curiously helpless feeling with this man; such a pleasurable sense of safety.

"We were made for each other, soul and body, from the beginning of time," he murmured, with the temporary aberration of the lover.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Vanessa. "I am not going to spoon, whatever else I may do. You have had scores of wives, and I have run the gamut of husbands, before we ever met."

He made a grimace.

"In much practise there is perfection. What I said still holds."

"Bobbie," she asked, with what mad impulse she could never define, "what would you think of me for a sister-in-law?"

His arms seemed to lose their resiliency; his whole body ossified.

"The thought makes me sick," he said, turning away his eyes.

But Vanessa had caught the expression in them, and it sent a shiver through her blood. Bobbie's capacity for loathing would be terrible! His passion of love he might curb in its fiercer demonstration, and his hate; but Vanessa suddenly feared his scorn. Her senses clogged under the lightning stab of the revelation. Love comes to some women through fear.

The next few moments found her very happily miserable. It was delightful to lean against Bobbie's square chest, through which she could hear the quick beating of his heart—far easier than to resist his arms going about her, for to his view she had no reason for resisting; but it was very uncomfortable to remember that James would feel that he had the right to claim the same privilege.

She closed her eyes. It was good to be loved. The touch of Bobbie's face in the soft masses of her hair made delicious little catches in her breath. The pressure of his big, firm hands upon hers gave her such a sense of protection as she had never dreamed of. Something in the trustfulness of his love filled her eyes with quick tears.

"Have you ever been so tangled up with some problem," she asked softly, "that you let it lead you where it would, and then found the problem all vanish except as to one point, and that point prove worse than all the rest? That's awfully mixed up, and not at all what I mean."

"I understand," Bobbie answered. "You are worried. I see it in your eyes—your wonderful eyes."

The eyes opened into his at that, with the result that both his and hers became blind.

"I've been an awful fool, Bobbie dear," she whispered, when her lips were free. "I'm an awfully bad little pony."

"I think you the wisest woman in the universe," he returned.

"The egoism of love!" The smile on her mouth came near to upsetting Bobbie again.

"Call it what you will. I am satisfied."

"But my problem, Bobbie!" She was possessed of a wild desire to tell him the truth, but she feared. Even as she spoke his face clouded.

"Who has been troubling you?"

She drew away from him at the sound of steps approaching, thinking it Clare returning to her; but it was Rutledge, leading his horse, who came upon them, evidently to his own surprise. The cloud on Bobbie's face deepened. The sudden conviction went home that Rutledge's appearance had answered his question to Vanessa in person.

Rutledge's anger had not cooled. He had ridden fast to Bobbie's place, and, being told there that the latter had gone out toward the woods separating the fields of the Winthrop plantations, he had followed. The expectations of overtaking Bobbie in these woods on his way to Vanessa had not improved the temper of his mood, but the sight of Vanessa herself in Bobbie's company stung him into a voiceless rage.

It was Vanessa who spoke, after the strain of the silence had become insupportable. That silence had been more enlightening than any words of a three-

fold enmity based on previous declarations which had been tempestuous.

"'Where is my wandering boy?'" she asked. "Did you see him, Mr. Rutledge, as you came along?"

"He has proved himself a poor sentry, Miss Joyce. Our surprise in meeting here in the heart of the ancient woods is mutual. I had expected to come up with *you*, though," he added, addressing Bobbie. There was a covert insolence beneath the polished politeness with which he spoke.

"You know my habits." Bobbie tried to speak genially, but his voice showed the effort.

"I thought I did."

Vanessa rose. As she shook a few pine-needles from her skirt she said, nervous, almost frightened:

"I suppose you roamed these woods and fields together with your first guns, and that they contain no secrets to your practised knowledge."

"None," Rutledge answered with percussion-like effect. He looked straight at Bobbie, who still sat on the ground. The tragic quality of Bobbie's silence was also something to be felt.

Vanessa glanced about, at a loss. If it were herself that was the disturbing element, she would leave them, and go after the boy. She could see him now, playing a little farther down the small watercourse. Yet she had an uneasy feeling that it was not anger against her so much as on account of her that was making itself as a gage between the two men. She hesitated. Whatever it was, there could be no doubt that Bobbie understood it, and shared it. Perhaps were she to leave them, they would separate, and go their different ways.

She moved off slowly, uncertainly, at first, so that her going without any words of adieu did not seem strange. She saw that Bobbie had risen, but the swinging around of Rutledge's horse barred his way in following her, if such had been his intention. An instant more, and a slight declivity in the path hid them from her.

At once Rutledge threw off the formality of his bearing. He jerked back on the bit of his horse until the sensitive animal threw up his head and crowded almost to his haunches. His master faced Bobbie, his lips gray with rage.

"I was looking for you," he said huskily, "to tell you that I am on to your dirty tricks, and that I consider you a dishonorable scoundrel. You have stolen from me deliberately the good opinion of the woman I love."

Bobbie shook throughout his frame, and gripped the swelling muscles of his arms with fingers that bruised his flesh.

"That is a lie," he counted, with dreadful distinctness, "and if I do not knock you down, it is because of your sister."

Rutledge's arm flew out. The blow fell just beneath Bobbie's eye. The next second, and they had closed in an embrace as deadly as ever the lust of fight in the human male had known.

Vanessa, returning suddenly, rushed upon them in vain. They did not see her. In their struggles they fell against her, and sent her reeling toward a tree. Then she stood upon its roots, her arms around it behind her, watching, uttering from time to time little, inarticulate cries of varying emotions, her eyes noting every movement of Bobbie's lithe but powerful body. As they fell together her heart leaped. It was Bobbie who was on top, but Rutledge, sinewy and strong of thigh, was not crushed.

"They are brutes!" exclaimed Vanessa, frightened now, for it seemed more terrible since they had fallen. She realized with swift tightening of her heart that men who fought thus ceased only with the victory of one over the other, and victory might mean tragedy. Suppose Bobbie should kill his slighter adversary!

"Bobbie," she screamed, at the thought, "if you love me, stop! Let him up! Look! For God's sake! You are choking him!"

Bobbie, breathing hard, dazed, his eyes unseeing and unsightly, stood before her.

"You have killed him," she gasped,

looking in horror over her shoulder at Rutledge's prostrate form.

"No; but I might have done so but for you."

"You are sure?" she whispered, clinging to him.

Rutledge stirred. In a moment he sat up, rose to his feet.

"Our opinions remain the same," he panted, his hand at his throat, already showing blue and bruised, his teeth chattering with his unappeased anger, which suddenly suggested to him a revenge more subtle than that of blows, irresistible in its tempting. "I wish you joy of the wife who receives two other men's caresses on the day she accepts your own, and lets one of them think she is to be his wife," he cried.

"Oh!" Vanessa choked, hanging to Bobbie's arm. "Oh!"

A terrible coldness overwhelmed Bobbie. There were no conflicting emotions to balance him. He did not think of the cowardice of the unmanly accusation. He did not think of his own faith, for the cold cynicism with which Rutledge spoke raised up a hideous doubt in the heart of that faith. It was not unbelief, but accusation, that swept through his voice.

"Is that true?" he demanded of Vanessa.

"I love you," she whispered, in such agony as she had never known. "Ask me no more." But he did, for her words, her face, her hands, were a confession.

"What man did you promise?" he thundered. "This one?"

"No, no; I promised no one. I swear it."

Rutledge, after his speech, had moved off to his horse, which had strayed a little apart. He did not look back, but rode painfully down the path he had come.

Bobbie let his arms stay about Vanessa until the trees had hidden Rutledge from view. Then he dropped them, and stood away from her. His face was very white, except where, under one eye, the mark of Rutledge's blow gleamed red and angry.

"Bobbie!" Vanessa cried. She, too, was wan, and her dark eyes glowed with an expression of fear and of such yearning as had never stirred their depths before.

"I fear I have made a mistake," he said coldly, bitterly. "I remember now that you did not promise me yesterday, either."

"But I do now!" she cried, as he moved from her, a leaden chill clutching at her heart-strings. "Bobbie, I did not know yesterday. I was asleep, I was dead. You have waked me to life. You shall not leave me now. Oh, Bobbie, I love you!"

He was looking at her, ugly unbelief in his eyes. She had struck the flint of his nature.

"It is better now than hereafter," he replied, and, though every step was made in his heart's blood, he turned and walked fiercely away.

When the last echo of his footsteps had died Vanessa sank upon the stones she had shared with Bobbie, her elbow on her knees, her eyes hard and glittering, the abyss before her smiting black in all its horror upon her inner vision.

She did not flinch from the knowledge. She felt as though sudden death had stricken her, but that as yet the blood still coursed in her veins, her pulses still beat, her heart still throbbed. After awhile they would all cease. No; they would never cease. Life had stopped; she would go on living!

It had all come about so suddenly, and nothing more so than the leaping into ardent life of her love. What had made that change in her feelings? And then she ceased to wonder as it became luminous to her that there had been no change, that from the first she had loved Bobbie, that he had but opened her eyes to what had always been. It seemed to her that she had never been blessed with clarity of vision before that moment. It was as though she had fallen, while asleep, into deep, cold waters, so deep that she rose slowly to the surface, but inevitably, in answer to an immutable law of nature. Perhaps it was because she was a good swimmer that she never thought

of sinking, once the surface was reached. But that was not yet. Steadily, breathlessly, she rose through the dark waters. When Clare, wearied at length of his miniature fortifications on the banks of the stream, came back to her, Vanessa was still sitting, her face in her hands, looking before her blindly, but seeing strange things.

Half-an-hour later she surprised James over his accounts in his office. She indulged in no preamble.

"I have come to tell you, Mr. Winthrop," she said, standing beside him as he sat at his desk, "that I have decided to resign my position as soon as you can release me."

She could have brained him for the slow smile of gratification that watered his pale eyes.

"As your resignation of one position implies the acceptance of another, I do not gainsay you. I must thank you for that resignation." He turned his chair, holding out his arms to her. Vanessa paled, but her eyes were resolute.

"The acceptance is not of what you are thinking. Of course I must secure another position at once."

"And hold it up to the very last precious minute of your single life. What an independent nature is yours! But why, Vanessa, is any resignation necessary, or any thought of another position? As soon as you are ready, we may be married, and it cannot be too soon for me."

She recoiled involuntarily. He had held out both arms to her, but let them fall at sight of her expression of dismay and repugnance.

"I cannot marry you," she cried almost defiantly.

"But you have promised," was the disconcerting and disconcerted response.

"That is nonsense," she said, after a moment's silence. "I was unnerved last night."

"Unnerved!" James' irritation swept him into a rare sarcasm. "May I ask, then, what you are when you have nerve?"

"You would find it out without having to ask if I were to marry you," she retorted, her mood swerving violently from that which had brought her to him, and hardening under the stolidness of his opposition. "But I'll never do that."

"I have your promise," he argued doggedly.

"You have not. I never made any."

"And your kisses."

"You may keep them."

"And you called me 'Jim.'"

Suddenly she turned to go, a spasm of pain contracting her heart. What was the use of defending herself, either to herself or to any one else? The action, which he took to be of studied affront, fanned James' annoyance into positive anger. He sprang from his chair, standing between Vanessa and the door. The jealousy of the man past his first youth, who has younger rivals, burst into flame, and the recollection of Miss Sabina's words made him forget himself.

"Has any one outbid me?" he demanded. "Last night——"

Vanessa faced him, her dark eyes blazing scorn of him; self-scorn also, which he had roused anew, seared her very soul.

"No," she exclaimed, more defiant than humble; "you were the highest bidder, but the article has been withdrawn from auction."

X.

After that Vanessa was very miserable. To render her heartache the harder to bear, there soon came about within her a reaction from the first lashings of her self-condemnation, and a persistent realization of the completeness with which she had burned her bridge before she had crossed it. It made the throbbing pain at her heart no less to remember that the world was still there for her to face, and the throbbing pain made this remembrance a bitterer one.

She was amazed to find that now and then thoughts of James and Rutledge also presented themselves, though when they did her love for Bobbie stabbed

poignantly. She beat down the repugnant promptings, but, like the memory of some fateful drug that would deaden pain, the thoughts recurred. It was strange that she never once dreamed of whistling Bobbie back. The very fulness and strength of her love made her helpless and hopeless in its own behalf.

Miss Sabina, aware that something had happened, moved about the house noiselessly. When she gave Vanessa the message Bess had sent, the latter had received it in silence.

"I suppose you will go?" Miss Sabina permitted herself to say. She picked up a trowel lying on the stand of geraniums, and began pottering about the roots of a sturdy plant. The action was so palpably a makeshift that Vanessa smiled. She did not, however, reply. The wide veranda lay in delicious shadow, and she leaned her head back in the big chair, watching Miss Sabina.

"Elizabeth has always felt it incumbent upon her to mother that fine-looking brother of hers. I doubt if she accomplishes much good. As the twig is bent, you know."

Vanessa took her up sharply.

"How is the twig bent?"

"I was quoting a proverb," exclaimed Miss Sabina, laying down her trowel. Her tones were a trifle acid.

"You had a purpose."

"I do not usually go about without one, Miss Joyce."

"Nor I," Vanessa returned. "Merely to attend to one's own affairs fills life with a purpose. That sounds like a commonplace, but it isn't."

"I am quite aware of it," replied Miss Sabina grimly.

Vanessa laughed. It was rather a bitter little laugh, but Miss Sabina did not detect that. As for Vanessa, she had always disliked this officious woman, and she saw no need now to attempt to placate her. Suddenly, however, it flashed across her mind that Rutledge's search for Bobbie that morning, and their subsequent clash, had something to do with Miss Sabina's being at The Range. If so, she owed Miss Sabina a trifle. That lady was breaking off from the geraniums wilted leaves and the remnants of faded blossoms. She seemed to have forgotten Vanessa's presence.

"I should like to know," Vanessa said, with admirable coolness, "whether you attempted to straighten a certain twig this morning while you were at Mrs. Grimké's?"

Miss Sabina scorned denial, but for the life of her she could think of nothing to say. She was a woman of resources, however, and spent a moment in smothering a sneeze. The enforced artifice made her angry.

"I don't know what you mean by that," she said fluently, "but if you are seeking information about Mrs. Grimké's brother, I may say that he seemed to be in an execrable temper."

Vanessa, remembering the scene between herself and Bobbie in the garden yesterday and Miss Sabina's sudden and soft appearance thereat, made shrewd conjectures. If Miss Sabina had depicted that scene to Bess in the presence of Rutledge, the encounter between the two men was explained. There was an air about Miss Sabina now that told Vanessa she was right in this conjecture. This woman had cost her Bobbie!

She turned wearily away, looking up at the feathery elms where they melted into the warm sky, while the sun gleamed on the polished leaves of the magnolias. On a patch of vivid grass, shadowless just then, a solitary peacock blazed his gorgeous jewels. There was something so dispirited in her whole attitude that Miss Sabina, after a moment's grim inspection, noiselessly turned and entered the house. If she had gained nothing definite by her attempt to sound Vanessa, it was at least clear that the girl's plans were not working smoothly.

But Vanessa had gained much, and when Bess came for her in the late afternoon, she saw at once, from something in the younger woman's manner, that this ride was going to be a memorable one. "So be it," she thought. "I had intended to make it so myself."

Vanessa began to speak to the point as soon as they had gone through the big gateway, and Bess had turned her horse's head down the road.

"Mrs. Grimké," she said, "I believe you have asked me to take this drive with you with a fixed purpose in mind. I hate suspense, and I think you do. Won't you pitch straight in?"

Bess laughed.

"You are right, Miss Joyce. I did have a purpose. I confess, though, that your abruptness has somewhat disconcerted it."

"At least, what is it?"

Bess pondered. She herself liked frank speech. She had purposed being very circumspect in what she should say, but, perhaps, after all, it was best to plunge in at once. She adjusted the reins, touched up her horse, and said:

"I wanted to ask you which of the three men you have at your feet you intend to marry. That is a frank question, and I had intended to put it differently, but I think you will not take it amiss."

"Not at all," Vanessa replied. "I intend to marry none of them."

Bess started. She was not prepared for this.

"Need I suggest to you," she said gently, "that they think you do?"

"They do not, Mrs. Grimké. I refused your brother last night, this morning Mr. Robert Winthrop refused me, and I have since told Mr. James Winthrop that I cannot marry him."

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Bess. "And you are as cool as a cucumber with it all."

Vanessa turned impulsively, her lips twitching.

"I am not, Mrs. Grimké. I am wretched."

"But last night!" stammered Bess. "Yesterday morning!"

"And yesterday afternoon and evening," supplemented Vanessa—"don't omit that. It was worse than all. Oh, I've had a whole cycle of love in twenty-four hours, Mrs. Grimké." Her voice broke.

"You are not happy," said Bess, with quick intuition.

But Vanessa's mind was already working in another direction.

"How did you know about yesterday morning and yesterday night?" she asked.

Bess colored. She did not attempt to explain.

"I see," mused Vanessa. "Miss Sabina for the morning, but——" she sat suddenly erect, her eyes brightening. "Do you mean to tell me she saw and heard it all in the night, too?"

"Vanessa," said Bess, using the girl's name for the first time, "you jump at conclusions."

"I wonder," asked Vanessa demurely, "if any one saw in the afternoon;" but Bess grew grave at that.

"I think," she said, "that we are straying from the subject."

"It is, then, the indirection that finds direction out. I will confess to you that I wished to learn what you know, and how you had come to know it."

Bess waited until the rasping of the wheels through a sand-bar had ceased before answering. She looked across the fields of cotton on either side, resplendent just then in the beauty of their royal bloom. There was a bob-white cutting the still air with his love-call from a distant patch of grain. She was wondering if she could be mistaken in her feeling that under Vanessa's bright but flippant manner there lay a sincerity perhaps unguessed at by the girl herself. A quick side glance at her companion's grave face quite decided her.

"Have you very many friends?" she asked, and Vanessa raised questioning eyes.

"Really, not one," she replied, when she had measured Bess' seriousness of purpose.

"I should like to be your friend," the elder woman said simply.

Vanessa flushed. "You are very kind, Mrs. Grimké, but the blessing of your friendship, I fear, comes too late for my active enjoyment of it. You have not thought that I must leave here."

"I suppose you must," Bess admitted. "Yes, I see that you must. I would

ask you to come to me, only it would be like jumping from the frying-pan into the fire."

"Yes; and of the two, the fire is to be the most avoided. I believe, however, Mrs. Grimké, that I have put the fire quite out. I am sure your mind may be at rest about your brother."

Bess colored warmly.

"It is not friendly of you to say that. You would have found me your friend, in any case."

For a moment Vanessa struggled with her pride, her bruised love, her longing for, yet shrinking from, sympathy. Her voice was a little defiant.

"Your brother and Mr. Winthrop quarreled this morning. I am afraid it was about me."

Bess, plainly worried, was silent for a space.

"How did you know this?" she asked at length.

"I saw it—I mean, I heard it. Your brother joined Mr. Winthrop and me in the woods. You need not fear their meeting so again. I am sure Mr. Winthrop would not care to discuss me now."

The words were a franker confession of what had occurred than she knew. Bess was frowning.

"That was not right in Jack," she said presently. "He should have spared you, at any rate."

Vanessa repented her confidence.

"It is very strange that I should tell you this."

"Not at all," Bess spoke up crisply. "You have been very recklessly playing with the lever that moves the world. You set it in motion, and then find you can't stop it. And levers have an unpleasant way of hitting those who handle them. Naturally, you wish you hadn't."

Their conversation had reached the point where silence could serve it best. Bess was somewhat aghast at her easy championship of the girl. She was tolerably sure that she could read by surmise how things stood, how Vanessa had been, as it were, shocked into a tardy conscience quickened by her love for Bobbie. Now that Jack was out of it, and she could safely assume that he was, was she right to espouse Bobbie's cause? Jack had behaved very badly; but did Vanessa really care for Bobbie? It was her duty to make sure of that before abetting them.

In her preoccupation, Bess did not notice that the horse had turned off the main road and taken the road that led to Bobbie's house. When she did she glanced quickly at Vanessa, but Vanessa, never having entered Bobbie's place in that way, sat unconscious of her surroundings. They climbed the hill, but not even the view of the purple mountains seen across stretches of valley upon which twilight sleep lay in misty grayness touched Vanessa's sensibilities, or stirred her from her brooding thoughts of Bobbie. It was only when an old negro, hat in hand, stopped on her side of the road and greeted them by name, that she looked up, recognizing the old man as one of Bobbie's servitors. Then certain features of the immediate landscape became familiar to her.

"Where are we?" she asked, and then, as her uncertainty grew conviction: "We must turn back. I do not wish to be seen here."

"No one will see us. The house stands far from the branch of the road I'll take, and I will bring you home through your own place."

"If he should see me here," returned Vanessa, "I should die." Her nervousness was so apparent that Bess felt surer of her ground.

They were bowling along swiftly now, and Bobbie's house, silent and rather forbidding, loomed dark among its trees to their right.

"Of course," said Bess, "no other two people ever quarreled before, or ever made it up. Of course it is hopeless. And, of course, it had nothing whatever to do with the other two unfortunates."

"We did not quarrel. We simply fell apart and broke into a hundred fragments. Really, Mrs. Grimké, I don't know what I'd do if we met Mr. Winthrop now."

Bess laughed. The fact of Vanessa's increasing nervousness was not lost upon her.

"Have you ever gone wading, Mrs. Grimké, and, without warning, stepped into a hole where the water was over your depth?" The voice, suggestive of regret, thrilled into sharp animation. "Isn't that a horse hitched before the house? Please look!"

Bess looked, and her levity fell from her. The lightness of her words did not carry conviction, but they spread contagion.

"We shall escape detection. Bobbie has a visitor."

Vanessa's face blanched. The twilight had come treacherously, the silver and orange glimmer in the sky going out with the suddenness of a light extinguished. At the same instant, the dark places of the earth glittered with innumerable fireflies, the air was cleaved by the mystic passes of the noiseless bats, the first, tuning pipe of frogs in a near-by meadow-bottom showed the Southern night, passionately palpitant, full-born at a breath.

The road-cart came to an abrupt standstill just opposite the indistinct mass of the house.

"Can you see whose horse it is?" Vanessa whispered.

Bess was silent. She could not see, and she was trying to still a growing tremor of fear that it was her brother's. Instinctively she knew that the same thought was harrowing Vanessa's mind. It was at that moment of strained attention that, as though in confirmation of their dread, two shots rang out horridly from the unlit house, and tore the night with echoes. Then another! Without a sound Vanessa leaped from the high seat of the cart, and darted forward.

Bobbie was never more surprised in his life than when, a minute later, he felt his arm seized and heard a voice, indistinguishable by reason of the emotions that thickened it, calling his name. He was genuinely alarmed when he found that it was Vanessa who was clinging to him with inarticulate cries of horror, and dread, and withal relief. It was the relief that suddenly made her let him go.

"What is it?" he cried. "Vanessa, what has harmed you?"

She pointed, speechless, to the smoking pistol in his hand.

"Good God!" Bobbie gasped. "Did I hit you, or any one?"

"Didn't you?" she stammered. "You are not hurt, either?"

"I!" he ejaculated, and turned to face Bess. He never forgot her tragic gesture. Then, as he looked about them in the darkness, the truth burst upon him.

"I was shooting bull-bats," he announced. "I was alone."

Bess sat down upon the steps. After a second, she sobbed once or twice, upon which she spoke:

"Bobbie, I should dearly love to see you tarred and feathered. You have shortened my life by a decade."

"I am awfully sorry," Bobbie stammered confusedly. He looked very sturdy and big in his loose flannel trousers and without his coat, his head also bare. "Of course I had no idea you were anywhere near—you or Miss Joyce."

He turned to Vanessa with an inclination of his head that made her flush crimson. He had suddenly remembered. The wild thrill of his pulses at the evidence of her concern stilled and congealed. Instantly her alarm was made clear to him. She had been in anguish lest he should have hurt Rutledge, of course! Bess looked up, feeling the chill restraint.

"I was taking Miss Joyce through the place and back by the field road to Wateree," she explained. "The night caught us unawares."

"It comes quickly," Bobbie assented stiffly. He slipped the pistol in his hip pocket, and strode to his horse, returning at once with the animal following him. "I do not wish to seem inhospitable," he remarked, "but I am going to see you safely home."

He had not addressed Vanessa especially, but she answered.

"I am sure it is unnecessary. Please, Mrs. Grimké, do not let him."

"Indeed I shall," Bess laughed, rising. "It is the least he can do."

Vanessa turned without a word, and walked on ahead to the cart. Her cheeks were burning, her heart was swelling, her head was held high. Bobbie had pointedly snubbed her. Her fingers smarted at remembrance of their seizure of his arm. It was all she could do to keep from striking the empty air in the surging humiliation his manner had put upon her. When he essayed to assist her into the cart, she went around to the other side, and climbed up unaided. When he had helped Bess to her seat, Bobbie swung himself into his saddle, and rode on beside her. Not once in all the way home did he particularly address Vanessa.

There was a cold little sliver of moon which it had taken the night to bring out, but which threw a ghostly light along the white road. It showed the forests, misty and uncertain, and the tender green of the cotton-fields seemed like an inland sea asleep under its disguising beams. It fell on Bobbie as he rode, erect, a splendid figure in his loose-fitting garments and his easy pose. But Vanessa felt that she hated him.

She had borne him no ill-will for his outspoken scorn of her that morning; rather she had taken it as a measure of his overturned love for her, and loved him for it with natural, if incomprehensible, feminine devotion; but the cold formality of his bearing to-night, his obvious neglect of her, doubtless his condemnation and misjudgment of her absurd appearance before him—these things filled her with a dull fury. Every vestige of her love for him was pent up behind a constantly heightening wall of wounded pride and a petty desire to revenge herself by doing something to show him how completely she accepted his own terms of disdain. The fact that Bobbie gave her no opportunity to show this, and that Bess also appeared to have forgotten her very existence, served to strengthen the desire tenfold. When they left her at her front steps, Bobbie riding off with Bess, still with only the most perfunctory attention to herself, Vanessa, her eyes aglow and two crimson disks burning in her cheeks, made a swift resolution.

XI.

The work of bringing James around had been ridiculously easy. When a man of forty loves with a full-blooded passion, no youth of twenty can stick so closely to the main point. Vanessa's renunciation of him had disappointed; her recalling him had righted the disappointment. His love was not the less ardent because he sheared it of luxurious concomitant emotions that he could not afford to indulge in at his age.

Miss Sabina was speechless a moment when told of the engagement. It was only for a moment.

"I am not surprised," she declared, pausing in the making of her coffee for supper. "The only wonder is that she got but one of you three. You are to be congratulated, James, on winning out over two younger and better-looking fellows. I suppose there must be a compensating clause somewhere! I warned you there would be one in my will—for your brother."

James beamed tolerantly.

"Monetary considerations, Aunt Sabina, have not entered into the case at all."

Miss Sabina laughed; then became caustic.

"Oh, haven't they? There's no fool like an old fool, James; and I'm not thinking of my age, either."

Just then Vanessa entered the room, looking for Clare. Miss Sabina confronted her.

"I understand that you have attained to what must have been an object of your desires. I congratulate you."

"Thank you," Vanessa returned without spirit.

"One cannot have *all* of one's desires." There was a thread in Miss Sabina's tones that vibrated.

"That would be too much to expect, indeed."

Miss Sabina was silent, through ex-

cess of subject-matter. She poured the coffee through with a hand that trembled. A sudden gleam of mischief lightened Vanessa's heavy eyes.

"Jimmie," she said, with cloying sweetness, "do you know where our little boy is?"

Miss Sabina dropped the cup. Shaking indignantly, she turned out the flame of the lamp. Then she faced her nephew.

"I have made my last drop of coffee in this house," she cried wrathfully. "It is preposterous. It is indecent."

James waited until the old lady's skirts had ceased to swish down the hall outside. His serenity was shaken as he went up to Vanessa.

"My dear Vanessa——" he began, and put out his hand.

"Don't touch me!" the girl exclaimed. There were dark lines under her eyes that made them seem darker and larger than ever, and her face was quite white. The curves of her mouth were hard. She seemed to have lost all color except for her hair and her glowing eyes. "I've got the devil in me tonight," she panted, not caring a straw that she shocked him to his foundations, never dreaming for an instant that as the force of the shock wore off his passion for her leaped into a very Walpurgis night of lawlessness.

It was just about that hour that Bobbie decided very suddenly that he had been neglecting his duties in New York too long, and was needed there at once. He had time to eat his supper, make his arrangements, and drive the twenty-five miles necessary to take the through express for New York at midnight. He also left a note for Bess and one for his brother.

Bobbie was really in a pretty bad way. He was very much in love, and he was very much in earnest in his determination to deny his love expression, since its object had proved so unworthy. He was tossed between desire —the desire of an unusually robust and vigorous manhood that had not dissipated itself in sorties of the affection —and an inherent demand that the woman he so loved should love him in like manner in return. In this he was no more selfish than the average human male, and he was at least averagely consistent. It never occurred to him that he had renounced Vanessa and ignored her protestation of love. It was his initial doubt of her that he could not pass.

He had not wavered in this exaction upon himself even in the light of Vanessa's obvious emotion at the time of his pistol-practise, because almost from the first minute he had misinterpreted the reason for that emotion. Love is never blinder than when it has been wounded, and Bobbie, once seeing false, saw more falsely at every turn. If Vanessa had smarted under his subsequent neglect of her, Bobbie had died under her haughty aloofness. It was entirely characteristic of blind love that he attributed her first frenzied appeal to him, and the free use of his name, as altogether an evidence of her alarm for Rutledge's fate.

He threw himself into the many distractions that New York offers, even in summertime, with an avidity that might have availed him something had he regulated it judiciously. He rushed through his business hours with a concentrated force that left him impatient of the evening, with its offering of despised roof-garden or seaside concert, which, nevertheless, he accepted, his set determination to win such nepenthe as they might hold for him only if he might do so solitarily clashing dismally with the frivolous surroundings and defeating his aim. For he shunned his friends; he avoided the club. The burden of his disappointment he carried with him everywhere, for he had not killed his love, but only bruised it. From being the most jovial of good fellows, he became morose and self-centered.

About a fortnight after his return to the city, he received in his morning's mail two letters. They were the first he had had from home. Miss Sabina's was short and to the point, and, quite by haphazard, he read it first.

DEAR ROBERT: I wish to notify you that I have this day, as I threatened to do, made you my sole heir in a new and properly executed will. This is not by any means as a reward of your superior merit to James, for I am fully aware that you would eagerly have married your brother's wife-to-be had she not ruled you out of the reckoning. It is only because I should not rest quietly in my grave were I to feel that she might possess anything of mine—except my lasting disapproval.

You have no doubt heard from the *offensively devoted* prospective bridegroom how *disgustingly* soon the marriage is to take place. He might have waited for the second sprouting of violets on poor Edith's grave. However, I wash my hands of them!

Your abrupt departure did not surprise me. Young Rutledge has also disappeared.

YOUR AFFECTIONATE AUNT.

Bobbie had become very pale, the unnatural pallor that comes under a suntanned skin. He rose precipitately from the table, his breakfast untouched. There was a strange sensation of vacuity in his head, as though his brain hardened and condensed. He was trying in vain to slip the letter from his aunt back into its sheath. When his servant entered the room, bearing the toast and coffee, Bobbie sat down again, perfunctorily. The man handed him Bess' letter, which had fallen to the floor. After a few moments, Bobbie opened it.

I do not forgive you, Bobbie, for leaving us as you did. It is unlike you to run away; and yet I admit it made one feel like dropping everything and beginning life all over again where there is no marriage nor thoughts of marriage. I am horribly disappointed in Vanessa Joyce, the more so because I had just found out she had depth, or I thought I had.

At any rate, she has James, and if I ever saw a man who was rushing blindly to his Waterloo, it is your brother. When these good people get touched with the salt of the earth, how mad and bad it makes 'em! Not that I mean to liken Vanessa Joyce to the salt of the earth, though I have little doubt that she has excellent stinging properties.

Jack has gone to California. I don't know why it was California any more than Nova Scotia, except that I think he wanted to put the breadth of a continent between him and this place. Before he left he told me of his encounter with you. How utterly wrong and absurd of both of you! Why do men lose their wits so about a woman? You see the result!

I repeat I am disappointed in the girl. That night we drove to your place, and found you tilting with the powers of darkness, I was sure that she was distraught about you. Did she have any reason for fearing that you were using her James for a target?

Bobbie crushed the letter together. He could read no more.

"Jenkins," he called to the man who showed himself again at that moment, "I am going out of town for a few days—a week, maybe more. Keep things running as usual. Never mind my letters. I don't want to read any."

Bobbie had known the place for years, and on its lonely beach had more than once conned over his notes of what he desired to be a particularly urgent appeal at the bar on behalf of some client, with nothing but the sea and sky and shifting sands for his audience. He turned to it now with impatient hunger for its solitude that made the railroad journey a slow torture.

There were a few figures dotting the beach before the best bathing-pavilion, a few were in the surf. Being a weekday, the absence of the usual holiday crowd from the city made the shore seem deserted. Bobbie, having engaged his room in the adjoining inn, thereafter paused just long enough to get into his bathing-suit, and then, skirting the idlers on the sand, pitched out for the long stretch of beach to the southward. His vigorous strides soon carried him beyond sight of human habitation. Then, raising the floodgate of his mood, he let his thoughts possess him.

It was during the days that followed that he became as well-known a figure to the habitués of the beach as the picturesque life-guard whose bronzed perfection of form was in no wise concealed by the few inches of white bathing-suit he wore, and with whom, indeed, Bobbie established his only acquaintance. It was in this way that by the hour he rode the light catamaran just beyond the breakers, finding in this enforced watchfulness of the bathers some relief from the thoughts to which he had previously fled, a willing prey.

In this giving his body in almost its natural state to the sea and sun, his personality seemed to slip from him with the conventions of custom, and his emotions to resolve themselves into the primal sensuous joy of living. In some far distant land, where men wore clothes and trod the solid earth, taking heed of time, he knew Vanessa was. A land of broken idols and shattered hopes, whose power to pain ceased at the ocean's sibilant verge. At least, so Bobbie dreamed, surfeited full with the indulged tragedy of his love.

XII.

It had not taken long for the fruits of Vanessa's revenge to turn to ashes on her lips. Bobbie's departure, almost simultaneous with the announcement of her engagement to James, and Rutledge's close following of suit, both without any recognition of her existence, were not so much triumphs to her as humiliation. She had had no means of ascertaining whether Bobbie had heard of her acceptance of his brother, but news of that kind travels fast, even if the medium is only that of negro servants on adjoining places, and Bobbie's abrupt leaving lent color to her supposition that he had heard.

It was strange, too, how hard it was to bear Miss Sabina's thinly veiled hostility. The old lady was proving herself an adept at poisoned innuendo, at covert sneers, at ironical smiles, that made Vanessa helpless with fury and sick with mortification. In some unaccountable way, her skill in repartee deserted her. There were times when Miss Sabina's plainness of speech became unendurable.

And there was James himself to annoy her. An ardent and exacting lover he was, and Vanessa was disposed to yield nothing. In an inexplicable way, it seemed to her, the coldness of her regard for him, her negative dislike of the man's character, became warm distaste and positive abhorrence of his person. But James was no virgin wooer, and Vanessa soon came to feel that her revenge upon Bobbie was being dearly bought even at the attainment also of a position she had craved.

She doubted if a woman had ever reckoned so little without herself. The ardors of James were filling her days with dread and her nights with an almost insupportable horror, for her own love for Bobbie, and the knowledge of his, were hedging her about with a multiplication of impossibilities.

It was an hourly surprise to her that this should be. Though she had so effectually put Bobbie out of her life, she found that thought of him, a strange, unacknowledged sense of being no longer the sole arbiter of her fate, but of having in her keeping the vital faith of one whom she loved as she had loved no one in her life before, permeated her every mood and action. That she knew she had shaken that faith to its foundation, if she had not utterly destroyed it, did not nullify the other feeling. And every day her antipathy toward James strengthened into a detestation of his memory and a hatred of his presence. Vanessa hardly knew whether it was her dislike of James that kept Bobbie so prominently in the foreground of her mind, or love of Bobbie that made her bond with James a thing of torture.

It was unfortunate for his interests that James should have followed her one afternoon when she was more than ever restless under the knowledge that through her unbidden love she had raised up against herself some force in her nature that was stronger than all her preconceived ideas of her own character. She did not yield without a struggle to this stress and storm into which she had plunged her soul. She punished her love with a remembrance of Bobbie's coldness to her, of his renunciation of her unheard, of his deafness to her confession; but her love only fed upon its punishment, and grew more insistent.

She took a path through the woods which she knew would bring her to a spot where she and Bobbie had often lingered. It was a bare little spot among the pines, but Bobbie had made her a rustic seat there out of a fallen

tree, and the place was fragrant with her memories of him. As she came upon it now, the light of the low sun was filling the forest with a delicious haze of tender grayish green. The air was redolent with the resinous tang of the pine-needles. Vanessa, however, paid no thought to the subdued charms of the hour. Seating herself on the fallen tree, she delivered herself up freely to her reveries of Bobbie. It was upon her thus that James, with the vaunted privilege of a lover, intruded.

"A penny for your thoughts!" he exclaimed, like a fool, startling Vanessa until she sprang to her feet, her eyes veritably flaming.

"Not for every dollar you possess!" she cried. "And the next time you creep upon me like a cat upon a bird, I'll break our engagement. I came here to be alone."

"With what?" he asked. Sometimes James questioned sharply to the point.

Vanessa, deigning him no answer, sat down again, her face turned from him. A bar of sunlight falling upon her hair lit it into a shining gleam of gold. An ugly and sinister expression made James' cold blue eyes baleful. There were times when he found his betrothed difficult.

"Vanessa," he demanded, "do you love me?"

She was silent, and he repeated his question. Something in his voice told her he would repeat it until he got an answer. She had, in fact, never disliked him more cordially. She turned her head still farther from him. The lie that might have satisfied him choked her, and her stubborn spirit scorned to stoop to coquetry.

"If I were sure that you did not!" he muttered. "You treat me like a dog, Vanessa. Tell me that you love me."

She cast about her for an answer. She longed, then and there, to throw him over, to give him the full brunt of the tangle of emotions through which she was treading, but, after smoldering almost to extinction, her cold prudence flickered into life again. Yet she loathed herself for saying with a reluctance that well seemed hauteur:

"Your question insults me."

She thoroughly respected his anger, and, in response to it, turned her head, listening closely.

"Your actions insult me!" he cried, his voice shaken. "Day after day, hour after hour, you flout me, you repulse me, you disdain me. And in a few weeks you will be my wife. What am I to expect?"

"What you get," she retorted, unmindful of prudence.

"And what do you expect?" He spoke blindly, stung by her contempt, but she read a threat in the words.

"Hell," she cried, "if I marry you!"

James recoiled. In all his life he had seldom heard the word out of the pulpit. He had never known a woman who would have dreamed, so he would have said, of using it.

Vanessa smiled. Because she was sure of her power, and knew that she could pacify him with a word, she yielded to the overmastering desire to shock him now. Every fiber of the Bohemian in her revolted at his smug decorum. She faced him abruptly, at the same time drawing farther away from him.

"You think you love me," she exclaimed, her irony biting him keenly, "but you are no more capable of loving me as I would be loved than is a cow of singing the *Gloria in Excelsis*. You pursue me with your passion. I hate your passion. Your reverse side is religion. I hate religion—your kind. It is merely passion soured."

James was watching her face, a look of dark distrust on his own. She stemmed the current of her candor at sight of it.

"I am not demonstrative," she said frigidly; "and I am not orthodox."

"A wife should be both." He hesitated, paused, was silent.

She read his mind aright. A word either way would decide him—a touch or a glance. She sat perfectly quiet, wondering at her apathy. The melancholy call of a ring-dove boomed full upon the twilight stillness.

There is more than one way of relieving a strained situation, and what

Vanessa would not bring herself to do now voluntarily, circumstance did for her very effectually. She had been mortally afraid of bats ever since Bobbie had shown her once how much they resembled mice. Consequently, when one at this moment, uncertain in the lingering daylight, brushed close to her face, Vanessa shrieked, crouched, and her head came in touch with James' shoulder. Instantly his arm rose, and held it there. To Vanessa the action had been the unconscious choice of two evils, but the pressure of her face against him made havoc with James' pride. He trembled at the thought of how near he had just been to putting, perhaps, an impassable barrier between himself and this girl.

"Has it gone?" she murmured, being ignorant of the habit of bats.

"Quite gone, tormentor," he responded, being ignorant of the cause of her demonstration. "But you must not tease me so, my darling."

Vanessa raised her head wonderingly. He still held his arms about her. He was making queer, bubbling little noises with his lips against her hair. A sudden illumination flashed across her mind, and she dropped her head again, letting him think as he would.

It was only three weeks to the day set for their wedding, and Vanessa had had no serious thought of refusing to pay the full price she was finding that it cost her. It was proving very costly where she had expected to be a recipient only, but Bobbie had deserted her, and she had the feeling about her marriage that the sooner it was over, and the detestable days of the honeymoon past, the sooner would she be able to adjust herself to what she had so long looked upon as the only feasible course in life open to her. She had, indeed, in the half-hour just gone, been very near to quarreling with James, and then still nearer to letting him slip the leash that held him. In the reaction now she felt for the first time a sense of satisfaction in their engagement. Had James but known it, he had never been so secure in his possession of her as at that moment.

Partly because he did not know it, and partly because of a streak of humility in his nature closely akin to hypocrisy, which made him seek to disguise the physical delight he experienced in holding Vanessa in his arms, he said:

"I had a letter from Robert to-day. He sent his tardy congratulations. It seems that he is off at some seashore, supplementing his long vacation down here. I fear that he will always be boy enough to like play better than work."

At the first mention of Bobbie's name, Vanessa had ceased breathing. Something of that same horror which had always gripped Bobbie at the mere thought of his brother's attentions to her swept over her as she realized that she lay in James' arms even while he reminded her of Bobbie's existence. She tore herself suddenly free, sharp anger burning in her eyes.

"Why do you say this to me?" she cried irrationally.

James frowned heavily.

"If you are going to fly into a rage every time I make a remark," he said, "your estimate of what our marriage will be is doubtless just."

Scorn embittered her laugh, and she looked away.

"I will thank you, Vanessa," James pompously exclaimed, for he held his anger in check only by excess of dignity, "to favor me with your face when I speak to you."

"And I will thank you to favor me with your silence," she retorted, turning her back more fully upon him.

To this James responded so effectually that when, a moment later, Vanessa wheeled about under an influence that was compelling, she found that she was alone.

XIII.

It is the prerogative of passion that it may pause to sulk. For the next few days James' pride battened at the expense of his infatuation for Vanessa. Forgiveness of a wound administered to his self-love had always been the rarest of his virtues.

Vanessa, on her part, was surprised to find her indifference to his evident avoidance of her gradually become anger. It was an anger, however, very clearly defined. It never outstepped the limits of her dispassionate powers of judgment. If there was one thing she heartily disliked, it was a man who sulked. She would have preferred the man who occasionally struck out with his arm, as her father had, indeed, been known to do. And every hour that James continued to brood over his injuries, thoughts of her marriage loomed more and more portentous.

But this was as nothing when weighed in the balance against the cry of her heart for Bobbie. The mention of his being at the seashore had brought back to her the remembrance of talks together about the tempting solitudes of vast beaches, with their backgrounds of sand-dunes and wire-grass, and the enveloping mystery of sea and sky. Their mutual love of the sea had been an early bond between them. Vanessa had confessed that the charms of nature spoke to her dumbly except through the sea. Now Bobbie was by the sea, she knew; alone, she guessed. Could it be that he had carried with him thoughts of her to twin with those so dominant in her breast? Instinct told her that he had. The joy of that belief made her miserable.

It was a culmination of that misery to remember that Bobbie, though he might be thinking of her, and going to desert places to do so more fully, did so only to despise and condemn her. It was this thought that almost sent her hurrying to him on the wings of her love, that she might, even if she had to bear his scorn, at least have also his understanding of her heart.

Things were at this pass with her when, one afternoon, finding the house unendurable, she slipped out alone, taking a road that led her down through the lowlands of the place where she might expect to be uninterrupted. The troubled state of her mind was inducing within her lately a most unaccustomed response to the influence of the wide stretches of fallow fields and the subdued mystery of the forests. Something in the far-reaching silences of nature began to speak to her, not unheeded. If it probed the secret places of her heart, the pain was not without recompense in the sure feeling that Bobbie, too, was nursing his bruised love in self-crucifixion.

Yet all the while Vanessa realized that she was thus beating around in a mere circle of her emotions. There was no outlet, no palliation of her suffering through hope; nothing to make her forget the growing hideousness of her union with James. Her spirit of independence seemed to have deserted her. She had become shrinkingly sensitive to the change in the regard which Bess had once shown for her; Miss Sabina shot poisoned arrows into her with scarcely a shiver of protest on her part; but her aversion to James dwarfed all considerations except her love for Bobbie.

It was not, however, until the present moment, when she had reached the edge of a little gorge which Bobbie had disclosed to her one day lost in the tangle of stunted oaks and sweet gum-trees, that the first serious thought came to her of renouncing James, and fleeing from a place which had proved subversive, it seemed, even of her most individual characteristics. The coming dusk was bringing out damp, cool odors from the woods, and stirring fitful breezes over the lingering warmth of the near-by meadows. The only sign of life other than that of field and tree was where a thin spiral of smoke rose slowly from a cabin hidden by the forest which had given it space.

The question that she put to herself was significant of the distance she had come from her original purpose. Why should she sacrifice herself on the loveless altar of this marriage? Dimly, without the gates of her willing attention, there lightened and darkened the picture of a marriage without the hideous stain of sacrifice, whose altar shone resplendent in the white light of a mutual love.

But what if she gave up this medium of escape from the hardships of

a life of self-maintenance, and found, after all, no other avenue open to her? If Bobbie should not turn again to her! If he should pass her by, perhaps to share his life with another! She closed her eyes at the thought. She had poured her libation to the gods upon the barren stones! She had joined herself unto her idols! As she opened her eyes, perhaps through some psychic suggestion of another's approach, she saw James passing just above her on his way across the pasture to the road.

Had Vanessa remained still, he would never have been aware of her nearness, but instinctively at sight of him she rose and moved farther along the little ravine, and the sudden gleam of her white skirts among the trees arrested his attention. At once he came toward her, the ugliness of his recent mood intensifying at the fact of her presence alone in so deserted a spot. He spoke curtly:

"Have I not told you, Vanessa, that you must not go about the place without a companion? Why do you not obey me?"

She did not hesitate.

"The time has not yet come for that," she retorted, her eyes indignant, filled with a meaning he did not detect.

James glowered upon her moodily. His natural sullenness fused poorly in the flame of his passion.

"I wonder why men love you," he demanded--for his words were a demand.

Vanessa vouchsafed him no answer, but sat down on a decaying log near the edge of the ravine. The tiny stream below her made a silver-like music in the silence.

"Do they all do it?" he asked. "I should like to know."

Vanessa paled to her lips, but she sat outwardly still.

"What difference does it make if I love only one in return?" she said.

"Which one?"

She smiled. James came closer to her, and she saw that he was trembling.

"Until I knew you," he muttered, "I never knew how close together were love and hate. You fill me with frightful passions, Vanessa."

She was startled by his suppressed vehemence, but, nevertheless, she laughed tauntingly, and drew back from his bending body. At that moment he seemed to her an unclean thing. He went on with unheeding impetuosity:

"You think me a blind fool, but I am not. I know now that you do not love me, that you do not love my brother, that you do not love Rutledge, that you do not love any one, and never have, and never will. It isn't in you to love. But you can make men love you, and then trade on their passion. You traded with me, and I bought, and I shall keep. It is well to be loved, but if one is not, to love and possess is not all hell, and you will soon be mine."

"You are mad!" she gasped, struggling, for he had seized her wrist. "You are all mad down here. You are drunkards in your love."

"A woman gets what she buys," he returned, brutal with the scourge of her evident loathing.

"Oh, what a whitened sepulcher you are! What a hypocrite! What a wolf in sheep's clothing! And you would have me your wife! Thank God, I am not!"

"But you shall be!" he cried fiercely. "Do you think that men are puppets to dance to your whims? Do you think that you can pipe to them when you will, and have them stop dancing when you tire of piping? I have danced, but now you dance, too. My eyes are open at last."

"And what do you see?" she asked, in sheer amazement at the sweep and abandon of his passion.

"What my aunt saw from the first. It takes a woman to read a woman."

Vanessa laughed with pliant scorn.

"Your aunt is an eavesdropper and a mischief-maker. She carries her goods to a willing market."

"Never mind my aunt," James objected stiffly.

Vanessa did not, but she was too indifferent to say so. Her recent burst of indignant wrath had left her singu-

larly calm. She knew, without quite comprehending why, that she had passed a mile-stone in her career, that there were forces at work which would shape her life in other ways from that hour. She looked beyond James as he stood before her. She saw the twilight creeping over the top of the rounded hill and slowly blotting out its lofty pines. She felt the shiver of the antenatal night, and in the moment's hush she realized for herself also an impending birth. She was not surprised when James spoke abruptly, his voice strident, with a premonition of some change in her.

"What are you seeing?" he asked.

"Merely the death of a day," she replied, unwontedly wistful.

"Such things." he complained, his eyes colorless in the dusk, "never used to give you thought. You are not as you used to be."

She glanced up at him swiftly. He, too, seemed to have come out of his anger, softened and thoughtful. For an instant she caught in his face an expression that reminded her of Bobbie.

"I have been to school to two great teachers," she murmured. Her mood veered suddenly. "Why do you not go home?"

"Tell me in what you are changed," he went on, unmindful of her interruption. "You never used to speak in this way."

"I do not know. It is as though I had found myself with instincts I did not think I possessed. Let us speak of something else."

"I do not wish to," he affirmed, stubborn at once.

The swift glint of anger that made her eyes burn should have given him pause, but he continued:

"You speak of two teachers. I do not understand. Of course there is our love——"

"Our love!" Her voice rang out, incredulous.

"And when you are my wife — "

"See here," she cried, stemming the flow of his complacent surmise, "I thought you understood. You said yourself that I did not love you, and I say that I shall not be your wife."

"What do you mean?" he asked slowly.

"Exactly what I say. Don't ask me stupid questions, for which there are only the inevitable answers. I don't love you, and I never have, and I shall, emphatically, not marry you."

He bent over her from where he stood, laying his hand heavily upon her shoulder.

"You have trifled with me, then, once more?"

"I meant to marry you." She strove to rise to her feet, but he held her down.

"For my money?"

She nodded. In some way her lips had become dry and stuck together. There was a baleful white fire in his eyes that frightened her.

"Do you know what men of strong passions have sometimes done to women who have lied to them?" he whispered hoarsely.

The threat in his voice, even more than his words, electrified her. She struggled to get up, but still he held her back.

"I could kill you!" he cried. "I could do away with you, and drop your body over this gorge behind me, and no one would know. For I love you, though I should hate you, and afterward I should speak love of you, where I should curse you."

"You are talking like a fool," she said calmly, "as well as like the Pharisee I knew you were. Will you let me get up and leave you, if you will not go away from me?"

"That is just what I will not do."

"You are a coward, then, as well as all the other things."

"That is always a woman's safe taunt."

At that she wrenched herself free, and stood before him, her face suddenly illuminated with a blaze of anger.

"I do not know that any woman is safe with you. Even if I did not already hate you, you have just shown me full cause why I should be crazy to marry you. Here is your ring. It will

fit any other woman, as it has fitted one before."

He struck it from her hand, and Vanessa fell back under the fury of his eyes.

"You are not worth being a man's wife," he muttered, his jaws set fast; "but why should I not force you to hold to the promise you have made?"

For a moment she writhed with the sense of her impotence, defending herself from his approach. "Oh, you are that, too!" she gasped out.

He laughed harshly.

"It is women like you, whose beauty is their only consistency, that keep sin alive in the world."

"The coward's plaint again!" she exclaimed, turning her back upon him to move away.

James sprang forward, the realization of the impotence of his will over her adding fuel to his desire to make her harken to him by force of his physical power. He seized her by the arm.

"Vanessa," he cried, his voice thickly strained, "do not provoke me beyond endurance. It is my love for you that makes me cruel. It is like fire in my veins, burning up all that is gentle about me."

"Your touch is hateful to me," she rejoined, throwing off his hand. "The more your love, the greater my detestation of it."

His answer was the primitive one of force. If she needed further punishment, she suffered it then. Breathless, dazed with wrath which was not without a touch of fear, she faced him when he let her go.

"I could kill you," she panted, "and not lie about it afterward."

He took a step toward her again, but she was watching, and before he knew her purpose she had thrown herself against him with such abandon that he staggered back. It was then that all her passion and resentment focused to a point of stabbing intensity. Scarce knowing what she did, she beat upon his face with her hand, forcing him backward to the edge of the cliff that far overhung the gorge below. The next instant she stood alone, peering into the tangle of vines and shrubs among which she could dimly discern a dark figure lying motionless.

That night Trezivant Grimké drove twenty-five miles with Vanessa, putting her on the midnight express for New York.

XIV.

Bobbie and the life-guard, daily seated together on the catamaran, clothed on with sunburn and a slight concession, were affording, unconsciously, subject for surreptitious snapshots from the beach. The combination was, indeed, proving a valuable asset to the proprietors of the bathing-pavilion and the near-by hotel, and the patrons of both places had, by a species of freemasonry known to those on holiday at seashore or at sea, come to take a kind of personal pride in the two young athletes, which their avoidance of other association than with each other only tended to augment. The theories concerning who and what they were ranged from the approximate to the romantic. One young woman had sketched their portraits in oils, and presented it to the office at the pavilion. When, in the evenings, they were seen in flannel negligée about the hotel piazzas, women watched them with a curious sense of proprietary right, and a delicious feeling that they had known them under even less conventional circumstances.

Bobbie, at least, was oblivious of the greater half of all this. He was finding in the self-assumed duties and responsibilities of the position, and its attendant aloofness, a salve for the smarting of his wound. He had made one trip to the city to arrange for a further extension of his neglect of duty there, and was deliberately blinding himself to the fact that the period of his sequestration was drawing again to a close.

The days had brought him a certain deadening of his pain, and the long nights, in which he could not escape from bitter retrospect, had finally accustomed him to adjust himself to his

thoughts. He had ceased to regard Vanessa as having purposely trifled with him, and his present estimate of her motives and action was not far wrong as it bore upon her conduct up to the point of the awakening of her love for him. That was a consideration that never came to lighten his heartache. He could conceive of positive dislike of him upon her part. He could not conceive of her love for him, even of her preference for him, in the light of her actual choice, which had doubly rendered her passionate affirmation the bitterest thing he had to remember against her.

It was because of this state of mind, removed as it was from the first sharp torture of his disappointment, but not yet beyond the dull throbbing of wounds which any jar might reopen, that Bobbie, on his return from the city, had brought along with him several unread letters, among them being one from Bess. He had not quite forgiven Bess her tone of levity as she had dealt him that cruel blow in the announcement of Vanessa's acceptance of James. It had not been like Bess not to see and feel, and, in seeing and feeling, to deal delicately with him. He had never answered that letter, and since his brief note to James of perfunctory congratulations, no word had passed between him and his home. He, therefore, shrank from opening another letter, which would shatter the security in which he was living just now.

There came an evening when he was alone. His companion had gone up to the city overnight, and so great had become the intimacy between them, that Bobbie had promised to assume his position on the beach, and see to the safety of the early morning bathers. In the hotel there was a dance in progress, but Bobbie avoided it, and crept past the guests to his own room, the gaiety and his own temporary solitariness weighing somewhat heavily upon him. After all, he felt, he had not outrun his pangs. Any moment, the least propitious, and they were ready to assail him.

His eye fell on the letter from Bess lying unopened upon his table. He had been a coward, that was all! He had fled from his burden, but even his flight had been half-hearted, and here it was in a flash confronting him again.

He moved about the low room with impatient strides. He threw off his coat, and rolled up the sleeves of his shirt, as though physically preparing for action. The touch of clothes had become insupportable since his recent habitual escape from them all day long. Then he picked up the letter and tore it open.

As he read his pulses stopped beating, stood still, and in a moment began to pound in his veins. His cold skin pricked as with needles, and the lines of his lips set between hard furrows with the appearance of sudden age. His breathing showed only in the quick dilation of the nostrils as his soul writhed under the fierce thirst of Cain.

He dropped the letter and fled from the room, which seemed to be throttling him. In a blindness of the senses he got past the groups of people seated on the veranda, and dodged the promenaders upon the walk beyond. After a time he found himself alone upon the beach, with the sea and sky about him, the mystery of illimitable, night-shrouded space bringing him slowly back to a consciousness of his own entity.

For a time he could think only of the dishonor put upon the woman he loved. It was not his love for her, but his hate for James, that worked fearfully within him. But, little by little, as he sped on under the silent stars, with the dim, gray sea forever at his side, his love began to feed upon what quickly gave it new life. As he had read the letter from Bess, he had wished that his brother's fall had proved fatal, but his gradual relief that it had not first turned the current of his mind to Vanessa herself. She was again free—free of her own choice, for Bess had not neglected to emphasize the fact that it was Vanessa's rejection of him that had infuriated James, and brought about the all but tragic result.

He checked his mad rush into the spectral night, and tried to think.

What was it Bess had written about Vanessa's distress and agony of mind? What about her coming on to New York? He could not recall it fully. Where was Vanessa now? How long ago had all this thing been, while he had been toying with the waves in an unmanly desire to get away from his own selfish grief?

Bess had written urging him not to judge Vanessa harshly. Bobbie clenched his fists until the nails bit. He thanked God for the distance that separated him from his brother. All that he felt for Vanessa was a surging pity that swept every moment into a fuller torrent of love. He forgot her faults and failings; forgot that she had turned from him and his love; remembered only that she was now alone, haunted by the shadow of a tragedy, and crushed by a remorse that did not begin to equal that which he should feel.

He threw himself down on his back in the sand, and gave himself over to long thoughts. It came to him with the flash of conviction that he had acted very foolishly in his treatment of Vanessa. To begin with, he loved her; how much he had not known until his pride bade him abet his indignation and turn from her consistently. He might have known that such love as he then realized was his would not be denied its way. The report of her engagement to James had but turned the current back upon itself, and now, to-night, it had burst all barriers, and was possessing him like a full tide. Moreover, in the new force of his emotions, the blessed thought that he had, by his desertion of her, driven Vanessa to turn to James against her will was an unalloyed joy. His passion stopped for no nice shading of motive; it leaped the tame bounds in which his previous logic had pent it; avid of its right to be, it seized upon what had before been confirmations strong of his doubt, and fused them in its potent alembic to the brilliant hues of a confident, glowing love. He saw it all now with a dazzling insight. Vanessa had been true to him; he had renounced her.

Under the whip and sting of this thought he pulled himself suddenly erect. There was a delight in the scourge, but it was a burning, consuming delight that made him quiver to get to Vanessa and lay bare to her the abasement of his pride and the tumultuous depth of his love.

He sprang to his feet. What was it Bess had written about Vanessa's distress of mind and her almost frenzied flight? Where was she this moment? What had she not gone through in remorse and discouragement, and in her pain at his renunciation, during these days that he had been rocking himself in a forgetfulness of his own griefs? The thought sent him over the hard sand with long, nervous strides. In the morning he would go back to the city and hunt for her. The cruelty of the great, selfish city smote upon his heart. No one had a keener instinctive desire to shield women from the harsh touch of the world. It was something deeper than prejudice; it was the inbred tradition of race. The idea of Vanessa, in loneliness and soreness of spirit, seeking a place for herself in the heartless vortex of the huge city's life, was a sickening thought to Bobbie, the climax of his suffering that night.

It was a cold, gray world that drove him in at last—the chill of an ocean dawn. The glittering stars had gone out, and the sky and sea, a void of echoing voices, met on the far horizon in a pale glimmer of what was neither day nor night. Over the waste of waters flashed the brilliance of the Sandy Hook beacon. Shrinking from the curiosity his appearance at that hour would cause in the hotel office, Bobbie stole through the open window of the little annex to the bathing-pavilion, which did service as the life-guard's room, and threw himself upon the bed for such sleep as might come.

By an upper window of one of the newest and handsomest cottages facing the sea, a cottage of cement, with mullioned-windows and roofs of heavy green tiles, a figure had sat all night, gazing into the sightless world without; a world to be discerned only by the

tremulous stars and the fitful gleam of a point of light now and then on wet beach or the heaving crest of a billow. Sightless the world, but the song of the sea was insistent, and Vanessa thrilled with a pagan mixture of joy and suffering as she sat and drank in its one, yet myriad, voice.

She had arrived that morning, glad beyond measure to escape for a time longer from the city, and thankful to a kindly providence which, through her old standby, the teachers' agency, had directed her to the woman with weak eyes but strong taste in things literary, who had engaged her as a companion whose chief duty would be to read aloud volumes of racy fiction.

Vanessa, who was feeling just then capable of reading the most perfervid book and finding it, in the light of her own recent experiences, pale and colorless, complied thankfully. Her relief at not having to essay teaching again immediately was also cause for gratulation. Her spirit, she felt, would have rebelled against the slow drudgery of text-book and the Pharisaism of moral precept in her present mood of fierce revolt and even more bitter self-repugnance. She welcomed the opportunity of association with one whose frank cynicism relieved her of the necessity of appearing other than she was.

Her employer, having completed the arrangement which had called her up to the city, had returned to her seashore cottage, bearing the spoils of her trip with her in the person of Vanessa.

"I hope you do not dislike the seashore, Miss Joyce," she had said, "and when I say the seashore I do not mean the palaced seaside resort where diamonds and patchouli take the place of sun-sparkle and the stinging in the nostrils of salt spray."

Curiously enough, the suggestion had brought to Vanessa no remembrance of Bobbie's recent flight to the sea, and, if it had, she would not have thought of him as still out of the city. She had never known where he had gone in what she intuitively discerned as his desire either to escape from his recollections of her or to indulge them with the greater scope, and it did not occur to her now to ask where she herself was going. She looked upon the city as the place that harbored Bobbie. She walked its streets dreading the chance turn that would bring them face to face, for she knew that the great city was the sure meeting-place, sooner or later, of those who wished to avoid each other. Like the artificial currents of air made by its tall buildings, it possessed this inexplicable tendency of mental suction also. She never boarded a car or crossed a crowded street, or entered a public building, without the expectation of confronting the man she shrank from meeting, yet whose image was never absent from her heart.

But this night thoughts of him had become a poignant pain that banished sleep and sent her to the low window and to the moaning of the sea in its black abysm of night, with the instinct of the wounded to beat upon its sore places in impotent despair. Truly she was hoist on her own petard, scourged with her own weapons, handled in such folly! The recollection of the past few months lashed her with a fiery self-loathing in which even her love for Bobbie was no extenuating grace, for also to that love she had played false. That she was free at last from all the coils she had so incontinently woven about herself gave her no atom of hope for the future, for she could only picture Bobbie's increase of scorn for her when he should hear that she had thrown James over as she had thrown him, with, indeed, added reasons for blame of herself. She could not endure that he should think of her so! If only she could let him know that it was her love for him that had made her retract her word at the eleventh hour! If only he might know that, the dull stretch of her life ahead would be easier to bear!

She watched the stars; cold they seemed in all the soft warmth of the night. A swift association of ideas recalled another night when she had sat at a window, throwing out into the future the lines of her machinations. She turned sick at the remembrance of

her cool assurance that night, and the effrontery which had enabled her to rout Miss Sabina. In her keen scorn of self, following upon her vaunted vanity, she struck her clenched hands against her temples.

"I deserve to be a slave all my life," she sobbed; "for I've been worse than wrong—I've been a fool."

With her head bowed upon her arms on the wide window-sill, she wandered through the hopeless labyrinth of her remorse and regret, her crushed vainglory, and the haunting shadow of that horror which had come upon her for one eternal moment when she had stood leaning over the verge of the ravine into which she had driven her enemy with what was the lust of murder in her soul.

The same chill of nature in throe with the coming dawn, that sent Bobbie in from that part of the beach not a mile distant, made Vanessa, too, shiver and look up. Like an evil eye of the night, the far-away beacon was flashing fitfully. Over the dim waters swept a voiceless wind as cutting as steel, and the thick darkness of the hush before day fell like a pall before her. Through it all the ocean moaned, and the spent waves purred upon the sand.

As the glimmer of dawn came at last, Vanessa rose, inaction longer an impossibility. Turning on her light, she wrote a long letter to Bess, telling of her new position, and thanking her once again for the aid and consideration that had been shown her. As she sealed this letter she felt that she was closing the only pleasant incident of her life in the South. After this there would be no further occasion for her to turn to that page of her experience, except by way of bitter remembrance.

She could not read. She paced the room restlessly. Slowly the gray day grew in strength, and the first hint of color crept over the face of things. On the eaves above her window the sharp twitterings of sparrows broke the sleep of animate creatures.

Vanessa went to her trunk in a sudden resolution, thirsting for the outer air and the caresses of the sea. She could watch, as she dressed in her bathing-suit, the clean, fresh beauty of the budding day, the whiteness of the sand which had been such an impenetrable mass of blackness an hour or so before, the quick burnishing of the ocean into copper and gold as the sun, still unseen, threw rose and vermilion into the soft sky. Then she went almost stealthily out of the house and across the silent stretches of beach. Early as she was, she noticed that some one had been there before her.

She did not go in the water at once, but walked down the beach. Her cottage was the last of a few rich houses standing far away from the little, treeless town. A five minutes' stroll, and the signs of human habitation were left in a distance seemingly greater than in reality because of lack of any salient landmark between. Still, by Vanessa's side as she went on, ran the footsteps of her predecessor, going in the opposite direction. She wondered whence they had come, nothing in sight giving her a clue, and because of the very lack of definite object in her walk, she traced them back. She had gone far beyond the sight of the houses, when she saw that the impressions stopped suddenly, and that on the softer sand, just above, there was the print of a body, as though a man had rested there. There were wide swaths of sand where a pair of long arms had swept back and forth at right angles to the body. It was suggestively bat-like, Vanessa thought.

Just because she had satisfied her curiosity as to the point of the origin of the footprints, Vanessa stood still, and began to question whither they had gone. Having nothing better to do, and noticing for the first time that she was out of sight of house and home, she turned about, retracing her steps. In the far-off distance, a speck upon the shimmering beach, some one was coming toward her. Could it be the maker of the footprints? And at once she lost all interest in them, their mysterious quality gone.

Whoever it was came on with strides that were rapidly lessening the intervening space. A disagreeable thought

that she might have been missed from the house, or detected in going out, and was being sent for and bidden back, possessed Vanessa for a moment. She put it aside as unreasonable. It was still very early, and no one could have heard her coming out.

The new sun was shining on the beach, wet and black as it stretched out before her. It dazzled her, and for a minute she lost sight of the approaching figure. Suddenly, much nearer than she expected, she caught it again. To her horror, it seemed to be without clothes. Was she going to encounter some devotee of the Kneipp cure, she asked herself uneasily, or some votary of the cult of the moral safeguard to be found in the frank exhibition of the naked body?

Without looking up immediately, she could feel that her sharer of the joys of the morning was coming nearer. He must be very near, she felt, for the glimpse she allowed herself of the gleaming beach presented a blurred vision of a tall figure, very brown, undeniably without clothes on the freely moving legs and arms, and—Vanessa pulled herself together with a relieved assurance. The patch of white upon this brown body was a swimming-suit, of course! How absurd of her, with the reminder of the ocean and of her own bathing-suit, to forget that! Yet, in some way, the man did not get by, and Vanessa raised her eyes frankly. Then she stood stock-still.

Eve could have been no more surprised when she first beheld Adam, or Adam more unconscious of everything than Eve, than were Vanessa and Bobbie at this meeting. Had a blank wall suddenly been interposed between their eyes, it would not have been the presence of the wall that would have seemed the preternatural thing to either of them, but that which it concealed. They faced each other for an eternity; and what each read in the other's eyes made anything like speech or explanation futile. However, after a long time Bobbie spoke, and his words went to show how much more eloquent are the eyes than the tongue.

"Vanessa," he cried, in a smothered voice, "am I clothed and in my right mind?"

"You are not," she answered, her lips twitching between smiles and tears. At last the tears came. "Oh, Bobbie, how I have longed and feared to meet you! How could you leave me as you did!"

There might have been eyes bearing upon them as many as the sands of the shore upon which they stood, but they recked not of them as Bobbie seized her in his arms. It was a long time before either remembered, and then it was, of course, the woman.

"You do not know!" she cried. "You would not touch me if you did."

On this supposition, his actions pleaded with her not to tell him. But Vanessa's conscience was stirred. She struggled in Bobbie's arms, at last managing to throw her head back and with her hand on his chest meet his eyes fairly.

"I jilted and almost killed your brother," she said cruelly.

"I am glad of it," he shocked her by answering. "If you hadn't, I believe I should. I did in spirit."

She put the soft palm of her hand upon his mouth. "Hush!" she whispered. "How did you know?"

"Bess. I only knew last night. Don't you know I would have gone to you?"

"Ah!" Then he had heard the truth.

"Last night I spent out here thinking of you," he said.

Those steps were his, then! She understood in a flash the torn condition of the sand where he had lain. "I sat awake all night, too."

"But why are you here?" he asked. "I do not understand."

She told him, and Bobbie listened, glowering.

"You must leave here at once," he commanded, and Vanessa flushed with delicious joy at the familiar tone of authority.

"How can I?" she murmured.

"As my wife," he responded with potent simplicity.

Vanessa became suddenly grave.

"I am afraid!" she cried. "Good should not come as the reward of

wrong, and I have been so wicked. Listen to me," she urged, as he attempted to close her lips. "I do not deserve you, dear. Oh, I have been so miserably worthless, so base, that I could not even see the good that Heaven showered upon me. Though all that was best in me was always yours, I could not even guess it. I held you least of those who wanted me, because you had least money. I would have sold myself —only there, too, I was a coward, and I could not."

"Why?" he asked, as deathly cold as herself, his arms holding her tensely. "Why?"

"Because you loved me. What right had I to cling to that?"

She did not understand the force of his caress, until she caught in his eyes the light of a great joy.

"Bobbie," she breathed, her heart fluttering, her eyes widening with the sweetness of a truth not fully grasped, "can you forgive me?"

"Yes!" he cried, his teeth gleaming against the tan of his skin. "If love for me made you bigger and better than you thought yourself to be, what could any man ask more? It is I who do not deserve you, for I, like a fool, closed my ears and my eyes to your cry. You do love me, Vanessa?"

"As I never knew it was in woman to love," she sobbed.

"And you have no regrets?"

The morning sun lit the gold of her hair as she slowly shook her head, raising her eyes to his in silent answer.

After a space she looked up to him again, her face sparkling.

"I shall deprive you of a fortune."

Bobbie smiled.

"No. Aunt Sabina, whether scenting danger or not, I do not know, has already retracted her bequest. It does not go to James, however, but to the boy."

"I'm glad the child will get some benefit through me," sighed Vanessa. "What a wretched failure I have made as a gospel to the young!"

"Never mind," said Bobbie, with a vast hopefulness.

There was another silence. By and by Vanessa said:

"The sea is singing to us. Let me show you my one accomplishment." Holding his hand, she led him down toward the water, the touch of her fingers sending his blood tumultuously through his veins. Something new and altogether lovely there was about her, the subtle hint of submission in her mastery that evoked in Bobbie a bewildering response. Into the sea they went together until, just as Bobbie felt he could resist no longer taking her to him, she let go his hand and plunged into the waves.

For a moment he stood watching her, dazzled by the smile she flashed back at him over her shoulder. Then he, too flung his body upon the waters, and with large, free strokes followed. 'Way out beyond the breakers she let him overtake her. Flushed by the buffeting of the surf, her face wet, her eyes like stars, she reached out a hand, letting it slip along the gleaming muscles of his arm until it rested on his bare, wet shoulder. Thus she held him, fearing deliciously the ardor of his gaze.

"Bobbie," she whispered in the sea's vast silence, "do you think earth is ever nearer paradise than this?"

"Not now," he said, his voice tremulous and sweet as music in her ears, as his arms closed about her and his lips covered hers.

THE DUST CLOUD



By E. F. BENSON

THE big French windows were open onto the lawn, and, dinner being over, two or three of the party who were staying for the day at the end of August with the Combe-Martins had strolled out onto the terrace to look at the sea, over which the moon, large and low, was just rising and tracing a path of pale gold from horizon to shore, while others, less lunar of inclination, had gone in search of bridge or billiards. Coffee had come round immediately after dessert, and the end of dinner, according to the delectable custom of the house, was as informal as the end of breakfast. Every one, that is to say, remained or went away, smoked, drank port, or abstained, according to his personal tastes. Thus, on this particular evening, it so happened that Harry Combe-Martin and I were very soon left alone in the dining-room, because we were talking unmitigated motor-shop, and the rest of the party—small wonder—were bored with it, and had left us. The shop was home-shop, so to speak, for it was almost entirely concerned with the manifold perfections of the new four-cylinder Oldsmobile which my host, in a moment of extravagance, which he did not in the least regret, had just purchased; in which, too, he proposed to take me over to lunch at a friend's house near Hunstanton on the following day. The distance was only eighty miles, he observed, with perfectly legitimate pride; there were no police traps on the road, and so an early start would not be necessary.

"Queer things these big motors are," he said, relapsing into generalities as we rose to go. "Often I can scarcely believe that my new car is merely a machine. It seems to me to possess an independent life of its own. It is really much more like a thoroughbred, with a wonderfully fine mouth."

"And the moods of a thoroughbred?" I asked.

"No, it's got an excellent temper, I'm glad to say. It doesn't mind being checked, or even stopped, when it's going its best. Some of these big cars can't stand that. They get sulky, I assure you; it is literally true, if they are checked too often."

He paused on his way to ring the bell.

"Guy Elphinstone's car, for instance," he said; "it was a bad-tempered brute—a violent, vicious beast of a car."

"What make?" I asked.

"Twenty-five horse-power, Amédée. They are a fretful strain of car; too thin, not enough weight, and weight is very good for their nerves. The brute liked running over a chicken or a rabbit, though perhaps it was less the car's ill temper than Guy's, poor chap! Well, he paid for it; he paid to the uttermost farthing. Did you know him?"

"No, but surely I have heard the name. Ah, yes; he ran over a child, did he not?"

"Yes," said Harry; "and then smashed up against his own park-gates."

"Killed, wasn't he?"

"Oh, yes, killed instantly, and the car just a heap of splinters. There's an old story about it, I'm told, in the village—rather in your line."

"Ghosts?" I asked.

"Yes, the ghost of his motor-car. Seems almost too up-to-date, doesn't it?"

"And what's the story?" I demanded.

"Why, just that. His place was outside the village of Bircham, ten miles

out from Norwich, and there's a long, straight bit of road there—that's where he ran over the child—and, a couple of hundred yards farther, a rather awkward turn into the park-gates. Well, a month or two ago, soon after the accident, one old gaffer in the village swore he had seen a motor there coming full tilt along the road, but without a sound, and it disappeared at the lodge-gates of the park, which were shut. Soon after, another said he had heard a motor whirl by him at the same place, followed by a hideous scream, but saw nothing."

"The scream is rather horrible," said I.

"Ah! I see what you mean. I only thought of his siren. Guy had a siren on his exhaust same as I have. His had a dreadful, frightened sort of wail—it always made me feel creepy."

"And is that all the story?" I asked. "That one old man thought he saw a noiseless motor, and another thought he heard an invisible one?"

Harry flicked the ash off his cigarette into the grate.

"Oh, dear, no," he said. "Half-a-dozen of them have seen something or heard something. It is quite a heavily authenticated yarn."

"Yes, and talked over and edited in the public house," I said.

"Well, not a man of them will go there after dark. Also the lodge-keeper gave notice a week or two afterward. He said he was always hearing a motor stop and hoot outside the lodge, and he was kept running out at all hours of the night to see what it was."

"And what was it?"

"It wasn't anything. Simply nothing there. He thought it rather uncanny, anyhow, and threw up a good post. Besides, his wife was always hearing a child scream, and while her man toddled out to the gate, she would go and see whether the kids were all right. And the kids themselves——"

"Ah, what of them?" I asked.

"They kept coming to their mother, asking who the little girl was who walked up and down the road, and would not speak to them or play with them."

"It's a many-sided story," I said. "All the witnesses seem to have heard and seen different things."

"Yes, that is just what to my mind makes the yarn so good," he said. "Personally, I don't take much stock in spooks at all. But given that there are such things as spooks, and given that the death of the child and the death of Guy have caused spooks to play about there, it seems to me a very good point that different people should be aware of different phenomena. One hears the car, another sees it; one hears the child scream, another sees the child. How does that strike you?"

This, I am bound to say, was a new view to me, and the more I thought of it, the more reasonable it appeared. For the vast majority of mankind have all those occult senses by which is perceived the spiritual world—which, I hold, is thick and populous round us—sealed up, as it were; in other words, the majority of mankind never hear or see a ghost at all. Was it not, then, very probable that of the remainder—those, in fact, to whom experiences have happened or can happen—but few should have every sense unsealed, but that some should have the unsealed ear, others the unsealed eye; that some should be clairaudient, others clairvoyant?

"Yes, it strikes me as reasonable," I said. "Can't you take me over there?"

"Certainly; if you will stop till Friday, I'll take you over on Thursday. The others all go that day, so we can get there after dark."

I shook my head.

"I can't stop till Friday, I'm afraid," I said. "I must leave on Thursday. But how about to-morrow? Can't we take it on the way to or from Hunstanton?"

"No, it's thirty miles out of our way. Besides, to be at Bircham after dark means that we shouldn't get back here till midnight. And as host to my guests——"

"Ah, things are only heard and seen after dark, are they?" I asked. "That

makes it so much less interesting. It is like a *séance* when all lights are put out."

"Well, the accident happened at night," he said. "I don't know the rules, but that may have some bearing on it, I should think."

I had one question more in the back of my mind, but I did not like to ask it. At least, I wanted information on this subject without appearing to ask for it.

"Neither do I know the rule of motors," I said; "and I don't understand you when you say that Guy Elphinstone's machine was an irritable, cross-grained brute, that liked running over chickens and rabbits. But I think you subsequently said that the irritability may have been the irritability of its owner. Did he mind being checked?"

"It made him blind-mad if it happened often," said Harry. "I shall never forget a drive I had with him once—there were hay-carts and perambulators every hundred yards. It was perfectly ghastly—it was like being with a madman. And when we got inside his gate, his dog came running out to meet him. He went straight over it—it was more than that, he went for it, just grinding his teeth with rage. I never drove with him again."

He stopped a moment.

"I say, you mustn't think—you mustn't think——" he began.

"No, of course not," said I.

Harry Combe-Martin's house stood close to the weather-eaten sandy cliffs of the Suffolk-shore, which are being incessantly gnawed away by the hunger of the insatiable sea. Fathoms deep below it, and now many hundred yards out, lies what was once the second port in England, but now of the ancient town of Dunwich, and of its seven great churches, nothing remains but one, and that ruinous, and already half destroyed by the falling cliff and the encroachments of the sea. Foot by foot it too is disappearing, and of the graveyard which surrounded it more than half is gone, so that from the face of the sandy cliff on which it stands, there stick out, like straws in glass, as Dante says, the bones of those who were once committed there to the kindly and stable earth. Whether it was the remembrance of this rather grim spectacle as I had seen it that afternoon, or whether Harry's story had caused some trouble in my brain, or whether it was merely that the keen, bracing air of this place to one who had just come from the sleepy languor of the Norfolk broads that kept me sleepless, I do not know; but, anyhow, the moment I put out my light that night and got into bed, I felt that all the footlights and gas-jets in that internal theater of my mind sprang into flame, and that I was very vividly and alertly awake. It was in vain that I counted a hundred forward and a hundred backward; that I pictured to myself a flock of visionary sheep coming singly through a gap in an imaginary hedge, and tried to number their monotonous and uniform countenances; that I played noughts and crosses with myself; that I marked out scores of double lawn-tennis courts—for with each repetition of these supposedly soporific exercises I only became more intensely wakeful. But it was not in remote hope of sleep that I continued to repeat those weary performances long after their inefficiency was proved to the hilt, but because I was strangely unwilling, in this timeless hour of the night, to think about those protruding relics of humanity; also I quite distinctly did not desire to think about that subject with regard to which I had, a few hours ago, promised Harry that I would not make it the subject of reflection. For these reasons I combined, during the black hours, to practise these narcotic exercises of the mind, knowing well that if I paused on the tedious treadmill, my thoughts, like some released spring, would fly back to rather gruesome subjects. I kept my mind; in fact, talking loud to itself, so that it should not hear what other voices were saying.

Then by degrees these absurd mental occupations became impossible—my mind simply refused to occupy itself with them any longer, and next moment I was thinking intently and eager-

ly, not about the bones protruding from the gnawed section of sand-cliff, but about the subject I had said I would not dwell upon. And like a flash it came upon me why Harry had bade me not think about it—surely, in order that I should not come to the same conclusion as he had come to.

Now, the whole question of "haunt," haunted spots, haunted houses, and so forth, has always seemed to me to be utterly unsolved, and to be neither proved nor disproved to a satisfactory degree. From the earliest times—certainly from the earliest known Egyptian records—there has been a belief that the scene of a crime is often revisited, sometimes by the spirit of him who has committed it—seeking rest, we must suppose, and finding none; sometimes, and more inexplicably, by the spirit of his victim, crying, perhaps, like the blood of Abel, for vengeance. And though the stories of these village gossips in the ale-house about noiseless visions and invisible noises were all, as yet, unsifted and unreliable, yet I could not help wondering if they—such as they were—pointed to something authentic, and to be classed under this head of appearances. But more striking than the yarns of the gaffers seemed to me the question of the lodge-keeper's children. How should children have imagined the figure of a child that would not speak to them or play with them? Perhaps it was a real child, a sulky child. Yes, perhaps. But perhaps not. Then, after this preliminary skirmish, I found myself settling down to the question that I had said I would not think about; in other words, the possible origin of these phenomena interested me more than the phenomena themselves. For what exactly had Guy Elphinstone, that savage driver, done? Had or had not the death of the child been entirely an accident, a thing—given he drove a motor at all—outside his own control, or had he, irritated beyond endurance at the checks and delays of the day, not pulled up when it was just possible he might have, but run over the child as he would have run over a rabbit or a hen, or even his own dog? And what, in any case, poor, wretched brute, must have been his thoughts in that terrible instant that intervened between the child's death and his own, when a moment later he smashed into the closed gates of his own lodge? Was remorse his—bitter, despairing contrition? That could hardly have been so, or else surely, knowing only for certain that he had knocked a child down, he would have stopped, he would have done his best, whatever that might be, to repair the irreparable harm. But he had not stopped; he had gone on, it seemed, at full speed, for on the collision the car had been smashed into match-wood and steel shavings. Again, with double force, had this dreadful thing been a complete accident, he would have stopped. So then, most terrible question of all, had he, after making murder, rushed on to what proved to be his own death, filled with hellish glee at what he had done? Indeed, as in the churchyard on the cliff, bones of the buried stuck starkly out into the night.

The pale, tired light of earliest morning had turned the window-blinds into glimmering squares before I slept, and when I woke, the servant who called me was already rattling them briskly up on their rollers, and letting the calm serenity of the August day stream into the room. Through the open windows poured in sunlight and sea wind, the scent of flowers and the song of birds, and each and all were wonderfully reassuring, banishing the hooded forms that had haunted the night, and I thought of the disquietude of the dark hours as a traveler may think of the billows and tempests of the ocean over which he has safely journeyed, unable, now that they belong to the limbo of the past, to recall his qualms and tossings with any vivid uneasiness. Not without a feeling of relief, too, did I dwell on the knowledge that I was definitely not going to visit this equivocal spot. Our drive to-day, as Harry had said, would not take us within thirty miles of it, and to-morrow I but went to the station and away. Though a

thorough-paced seeker after truth might, no doubt, have regretted that the laws of time and space did not permit him to visit Bircham after the sinister dark had fallen, and test whether for him there was visible or audible truth in the tales of the village gossips. I was conscious of no such regret. Bircham and its fables had given me a very bad night, and I was perfectly aware that I did not in the least want to go near it, though yesterday I had quite truthfully said I should like to do so. In this brightness, too, of sun and sea wind at my waking moments I felt none of the *malaise* which a sleepless night usually gives me. I felt particularly well, particularly pleased to be alive; and also, as I have said, particularly content not to be going to Bircham. I was quite satisfied to leave my curiosity unsatisfied.

The motor came round about half-past ten, and we started at once; Harry and Mrs. Morrison, a cousin of his, sitting behind in the big back seat, large enough to hold a comfortable three; and I on the left of the driver, in a sort of trance—I am not ashamed to confess it—of expectancy and delight. I did not want to drive any more than Harry wanted to, for driving, so I hold, is too absorbing; it takes the attention in too firm a grip; the mania of the true motorist is not consciously enjoyed. For the passion for motors is a taste—I had almost said a gift—as distinct and as keenly individual as the passion for music or mathematics. Those who use motors most—merely as a means of getting rapidly from one place to another—are often entirely without it, while those whom adverse circumstances—over which they have no control—compel to use them least may have it to a supreme degree. To those who have it, analysis of their passion is perhaps superfluous; to those who have it not, explanation is almost unintelligible. Pace, however, and the control of pace, and, above all, the sensuous consciousness of pace, are at the root of it, and pleasure in pace is common to most people, whether it is in the form of a galloping horse, or the pace of the skate hissing over smooth ice, or the pace of a free-wheel bicycle humming down-hill, or, more impersonally, the pace of the smashed ball at lawn-tennis, the driven ball at golf, or the low, boundary hit at cricket. But the sensual consciousness of pace, as I have said, is needful—one might experience it seated in front of the engine of an express train, though not in a wadded, shut-windowed carriage, when the wind of movement is not felt. Then add to this rapture of the rush through riven air the knowledge that huge, relentless force is controlled by a little lever, and directed by a little wheel, on which the hands of the driver seem to lie so negligently. A great, untamed devil has there his bridle, and he answers to it, as Harry had said, like a horse with a fine mouth. He has hunger and thirst, too, slakeless, and greedily he laps of his soup of petrol, which turns to fire in his mouth; electricity, the force that rends clouds asunder, and causes towers to totter, is the spoon with which he feeds himself, and as he eats he races onward, and the road opens like torn linen in front of him. Yet how obedient, how amenable, is he, for with a touch on his snaffle his speed is redoubled or melts into thin air, so that before you know you have touched the rein he has exchanged his swallow-flight for a mere saunter through the lanes. But he ever loves to run, and, knowing this, you will bid him lift up his voice and tell those who are in his path that he is coming, so that he will not need the touch that checks. Hoarse and jovial is his voice, hooting to the wayfarer, and, if his hooting be not heard, he has a great guttural, falsetto scream that leaps from octave to octave, and echoes from the hedges that are passing in blurred lines of hanging green. And, as you go, the romantic isolation of divers in deep seas is yours; masked and hooded companions may be near you, also, in their driving-dress for this plunge through the swift tides of air, but you, like them, are alive and isolated, conscious only of the ripped ribband of road, the two great lantern-eyes of the wonderful monster that look

through drooped eyelids by day, but gleam with fire by night, the two earlaps of slash-boards, and the long, lean bonnet in front which is the skull and brain-cart of that swift, untiring energy that feeds on fire, and whirls its two tons weight up-hill and down-dale as if some new law as everlasting as gravity, and, like gravity, making it go ever swifter, was its sole control.

For the first hour the essence of these joys, any description of which compared with the real thing is but as a stagnant pond compared to the bright rushing of a mountain-stream, were mine. A straight switch-back road lay in front of us, and the monster plunged silently down-hill, and said below his breath "ha-ha—ha-ha—ha-ha" as, without diminution of speed, he breasted the opposing slope. In my control were his great vocal chords, and it rejoiced me to let him hoot to a pony-cart, three hundred yards ahead, with a hand on his falsetto scream if his ordinary tones of conversation were unheard or disregarded. Then came a road crossing ours at right-angles, and the dear monster seemed to say: "Yes, yes, see how obedient and careful I am. I stroll with my hands in my pockets." Then, again, a puppy from a farmhouse staggered warlike into the road, and the monster said: "Poor little chap; get home to your mother, or I'll talk to you in earnest." The poor little chap did not take the hint, so the monster slackened speed and just said "Whoof!" Then it chuckled to itself as the puppy scuttled into the hedge, seriously alarmed, and next moment our self-made wind screeched and whistled round us again.

Napoleon, I believe, said that the power of an army lay in its feet; that is true also of the monster. There was a loud bang, and in thirty seconds we were at a standstill. The monster's off forefoot troubled it, and the chauffeur said: "Yes, sir, burst."

So the burnt boot was taken off and a new boot put on, a boot that had never been on foot before. The foot in question was held up on a jack during this operation, and the new boot laced up with a pump. This took exactly twenty-five minutes. Then the monster got his spoon going again and said: "Let me run; oh, let me run." And for fifteen miles on a straight and empty road it ran. I timed the miles, but shall not produce their chronology for the benefit of a forsworn constabulary.

But there were no more dithyrambics that morning. We should have reached Hunstanton in time for lunch. Instead, we waited to repair our fourth puncture at 1:45 P. M., and twenty-five miles short of our destination. This fourth puncture was caused by a spicule of flint three-quarters of an inch long, sharp, it is true, but weighing, perhaps, two pennyweight, while we weighed two tons. It seemed an impertinence. So we lunched at a wayside inn, and during lunch the pundits held a consultation, of which the upshot was this:

We had no more boots for our monster, for his off forefoot had burst once and punctured once—thus necessitating two soles and one boot. Similarly, but more so, his off hind foot had burst twice—thus necessitating two boots and two soles. Now, there was no certain shoemaker's shop at Hunstanton, as far as we knew, but there was a regular Harrod's store at King's Lynn, which was about equidistant.

"Ah!" so said the chauffeur—there was something wrong with the monster's spoon (ignition) and he didn't rightly know what, and, therefore, it seemed the prudent part not to go to Hunstanton—lunch, a thing of the preterit, having been the object—but to the well-supplied King's Lynn. And we all breathed a pious hope that we might get there.

Whizz! Hoot! Purr! The last boot held, the spoon went busily to the monster's mouth, and we just flowed into King's Lynn. The return journey, so I vaguely gathered, would be made by other roads, but, personally, intoxicated with air and movement, I neither asked nor desired to know what those roads would be. That one small but rather salient fact it is necessary to record here: that as we waited at King's Lynn, and as we buzzed homeward after-

ward, no thought of Bircham entered my head at all. The subsequent hallucination, if hallucination it was, was not, as far as I know, self-suggested. That we had gone out of our way for the sake of the garage, I knew, and that was all. Harry also has told me that he did not know where our road would take us.

The rest that follows is the baldest possible narrative of what actually occurred. But it seems to me, a humble student of the occult, to be curious.

While we waited we had tea in a hotel looking onto a big, empty square of houses, and after tea we waited a very long time for our monster to pick us up. Then the telephone inquired for "the gentleman on the motor," and since Harry had strolled out to get a local evening paper with news of the last test match, I applied ear and mouth to that elusive instrument. What I heard was not encouraging: the ignition had gone very wrong indeed, and "perhaps" in an hour we should be able to start. It was then about half-past six, and we were just seventy-eight miles from Dunwich.

Harry came back soon after this, and I told him what the message from the garage had been. What he said was this:

"Then we shan't get back till long after dinner. We might just as well have camped out to see your ghost."

As I have already said, no notion of Bircham was in my mind, and I mention this as evidence that, even if it had been, Harry's remark would have implied that we were not going through Bircham.

The hour lengthened itself into an hour and a half. Then the monster, quite well again, came hooting round the corner, and we got in.

"Whack her up, Jack," said Harry to the chauffeur. "The roads will be empty. You had better light up at once."

The monster, with his eyes a-gleam, was whacked up, and never in my life have I been carried so cautiously and yet so swiftly. Jack never took a risk or the possibility of a risk, and when the road was clear and open he let the monster run as fast as it wished. Its eyes made day of the road fifty yards ahead, and the romance of night was fairy-land round us. Hares started from the roadside, and raced in front of us for a hundred yards, then just wheeled in time to avoid the earflaps of the great, triumphant brute that carried us. Moths flitted across, struck sometimes by lenses of its eyes, and the miles peeled over our shoulders. When It occurred we were going top-speed. And this was It, quite unsensational, but to us quite inexplicable, unless my midnight imaginings happened to be true.

As I have said, I was in command of the hooter and of the siren. We were flying along on a straight down-grade, as fast as ever we could go, for the engines were working, though the decline was considerable. Then, quite suddenly, I saw in front of us a thick cloud of dust, and knew instinctively and on the instant, without thought or reasoning, what that must mean. Evidently something going very fast—or else so large a cloud could not have been raised—was in front of us, and going in the same direction as ourselves. Had it been something on the road coming to meet us, we should, of course, have seen the vehicle first, and run into the dust-cloud afterward. Had it, again, been something of low speed, a horse and dog-cart, for instance, no such dust could have been raised. But, as it was, I knew at once that there was a motor traveling swiftly just ahead of us, also that it was not going as fast as we were, or we should have run into its dust much more gradually. As it was, we went into it as into a suddenly lowered curtain.

"Slow down, and put on the brake," I shrieked to Jack. "There's something just ahead of us."

As I spoke I wrought a wild concerto on the hooter, and with my right hand groped for the siren, but did not find it. Simultaneously I heard a wild, frightened shriek, just as if I had sounded the siren myself. Jack had felt for it, too, and our hands fingered each other. Then we entered the dust-cloud.

We slowed down with extraordinary speed, and, still peering ahead, we went dead-slow through it. I had not put on my goggles after leaving King's Lynn, and the dust stung and smarted in my eyes. It was not, therefore, a belt of fog, but real road-dust. And at the moment we crept through it I felt Harry's hands on my shoulder.

"There's something just ahead," he said. "Look, don't you see the tail light?"

As a matter of fact, I did not, and, still going very slow, we came out of that dust-cloud. The broad, empty road stretched in front of us; a hedge was on each side, and there was no turning either to right or left. Only, on the right, was a lodge and gates, which were closed. The lodge had no lights in any window.

Then we came to a standstill; the air was dead-calm, not a leaf in the hedgerow trees was moving, not a grain of dust was lifted from the road. But behind it still hung in the air, and stopped dead short at the closed lodge-gates. We had moved very slowly for the last hundred yards; it was difficult to suppose that it was of our making. Then Jack spoke, with a curious crack in his voice.

"It must have been a motor, sir," he said. "But where is it?"

I had no reply to this, and from behind another voice, Harry's voice, spoke. For the moment I did not recognize it, for it was strained and faltering.

"Did you open the siren?" he asked.

I tried to say "No," but could not. Simply no sound came.

Then we went on again. Soon we came to scattered lights in houses by the wayside.

"What's this place?" I asked Jack.

"Bircham, sir," said he.



A SONNET IN VOWELS

(VALENTINE)

SWEETHEART, I choose in voweled words to say
How Love within my heart makes prayer to be
A prisoner no longer; but, set free,
To seek you out on some propitious day.
Through paths of doubt, desire shall lead the way,
And hope shall light him, that his eyes may see
The roses beckon to the shrine where he
Shall find his saint and worship her for ay.

Song on his lips, he comes at last to try
To win the word that shall bring joy or woe;
To kneel and make his supplication true:
Hear him the while his lips shall testify
To dreams and rapturous delight I know,
For all of which, belovèd, I owe you!

FELIX CARMEN.



THE Sixth Avenue shopping express, which had slowed down almost to a halt at the Fifty-third Street curve, suddenly lurched forward with a series of vibrant jerks that unceremoniously clipped off the sharp retort which Sybil Waring was in the course of uttering. As she straightened the simple black straw hat, which had just suffered a rear-end collision with a brown derby behind her, she had time to realize that she and Horton Bruce had been on the verge of their first serious quarrel.

The issue between them was not a new one. Ever since their wedding-day had been tentatively fixed for the end of November, it had been a familiar bone of contention, repeatedly unearthed and wrangled over, each time a shade less amicably. It concerned the propriety of a small loan, which the man, with tactless fondness, pressed upon her, and which the girl, from obvious scruples, refused to accept. Sybil had what she regarded as a proper pride. She thought no less of herself for being poor and earning her own living; and she could give herself gladly and proudly to the man she loved, without letting his social and financial advantages raise a false barrier between them. But she would not come to him until she could afford, at least, a marriage-gown that need not make him ashamed of her. As far back as last March, she had told him this, to prove that there was no coquetry or self-distrust in her postponement of their marriage through so many tedious months. Music lessons, she frankly owned, did not yield large dividends, even when a young woman possessed all the wonderful talent that Horton persisted in attributing to her. Beyond the cost of the three modest rooms that Sybil made cozy and homelike for an invalid mother, there was the steady daily drain of petty, unforeseen expenses, in which her small economies seemed to melt like snow, while the dream of bridal fineries elusively receded, like the pot of gold beneath the rainbow's end.

To the prosperous young real-estate broker it seemed, as he had often told her, not merely Quixotic, but unfair, that he should be kept out of his happiness until she had gathered, penny by penny, the price of a few furbelows which a stroke of his pen could pay for ten times over. To her it was a source of hurt amazement that she could not make him see the issue through her eyes. Of course, after she was once his wife—after she could proudly sign herself Mrs. Horton Bruce—it would be part of her new happiness, part of her rights and responsibilities, to spend the money that he chose to give her. Occasionally she had even made audacious little plans of costly favors that she might some day summon courage to ask of him, and had flushed a little in anticipation of her boldness. But now, before the wedding, to take money from him, even under the pretense of a loan; *his* money to buy her gloves and stockings and all the needful, intimate garments that make up a young bride's trousseau—why, it made her hotly resentful that he should not see for himself the obvious indelicacy of his offer.

So, with brave tenacity, the girl held to her purpose, although each month, as

freedom drew nearer, the drudgery of music lessons grew more intolerable. She had grown thinner, her mirror told her, and had lost something of her girlish color. Her ears ached from the daily violence done them by pupils who, she had grown to believe, had only discord in their souls. There were hours when the running of scales rasped her nerves like the tearing of fine linen; hours when Paderewski's Minuet, under the torture of small, clumsy fingers, inspired her with a malignant hate. Yet one by one the months had gone, however much they seemed to lag.

It was October now, a glorious day, crisp and clear. The air was full of sunshine and harmony and the joy of living. Nothing of the sadness that characterizes autumn in the open country was in evidence in the brisk, teeming city streets—nothing, unless here and there an isolated eddy of whirling leaves, brown and shriveled, that had drifted down a side street from their rightful home in Central Park. For weeks Sybil had looked forward to this particular day, resisting the temptation to buy a single handkerchief, a single pair of gloves, so that she might crowd the whole joy of acquiring her modest little outfit into one rash, delicious, dizzy whirl of shopping.

The pleasure that shone in her blue eyes was deep and limpid as the sky itself when Horton called for her that morning. The lessons were banished from sight and mind until the morrow; her wedding-day was scarcely six weeks off; and in her purse, drawn yesterday from the bank, was the small hoard that stood for so many weeks of patient denial. She had agreed to give part of her morning to the weighty question of carpets and hangings for their future home; but the closing of an important title robbed Horton of his holiday; he explained that he was already late for his appointment. Secretly, Sybil was not sorry. She wanted to be quite by herself for the whole day, to have no prosaic problems of portières, rugs, and oil-cloths intrude themselves upon the pretty vanities of lace and chiffon. She had a vague, half-formulated sense that this was one of the big days in a lifetime, the days that come but once; and instinctively she sought to guard it from any jarring note. And now, in the train, the old dispute, like a cloud no bigger than her hand, had risen, threatening to overcast her joy.

It was his clumsy kindliness that made it doubly hard to refuse. "You have had your own way," he told her; "you have earned your own wedding-dress, down to the very last stitch of it; and now that it is done, I am as proud as you are. It was the right thing to do; it was the proper sort of pride. But there are fifty other things that you will want, and you'll find that you can't afford them. The money won't quite stretch round when you come to buy them. Two months from now I can buy them for you without so much as asking leave, so why not now?"

"Two months from now, if you don't buy things for me, I shall ask you for them quite brazenly, and you will shake your head and say: 'My dear, I am afraid you are growing very extravagant!'"

"Then, please me by beginning your brazen extravagance now, and see what I will say. Come, be a sensible little girl, and put your 'proper pride' in your pocket. Let me have the fun of helping out, just a little. After all, it is partly my wedding, you know, as much as it is yours."

She knew that, under his light banter, he was hurt at her persistence. And, partly because of this knowledge, partly because luxury suddenly seemed so tantalizingly near; because she coveted the new autumn hats and frocks of the other women all around her in the car; because, in short, the spirit of buying was upon her, and she felt herself upon the brink of yielding, she was finally stung into making the angry and irrational retort: "I would rather steal the money than take it from you!" The train clipped short the spoken words, but not their import. Silence fell between the two as they slid past the Fifty-third Street station and swung into Sixth Avenue. But a swift glance at his face showed her an enigmatic

smile lurking on his lips, as though his thoughts were not wholly displeasing. Presently he spoke lightly of other matters, and, with a little gasp of relief, she helped to guide conversation back into peaceful channels. At Twenty-eighth Street she began to gather her various possessions together—her handkerchief, which she replaced in her shopping-bag; her small parcel of taffeta, which she had frugally planned to try to match. Suddenly she felt something hard and small lying on the seat beside her.

"Oh, Horton! Some one has lost a pocketbook!" She held it up for his inspection. It was a plain little purse of black seal, and seemingly quite new. It typified the refined and costly simplicity which Sybil herself would have preferred to any amount of silver filigree.

"Perhaps that woman who got off in such a hurry at a Hundred and Tenth Street dropped it, before we moved over," hazarded Bruce, deliberately opening the purse, which betrayed the crisp crackle of bank-notes.

"Then she must have been a pickpocket, for she had her own money tied up in the corner of a very dirty red handkerchief. Oh, Horton, what would you do with it? Give it to the guard?"

"I'd sooner throw it into the street!" He smiled quizzically at her eager perplexity. "A gloria umbrella is the limit of strain that you have a right to put on a guard's official honesty. Come, or you will be carried by your station."

Once safely on the platform, Sybil stood looking ruefully after the receding train. "What did you get off for, Horton? You will be dreadfully late."

"To keep you from throwing away your treasure-trove, you reckless young woman. If I leave you, will you promise not to do anything foolish?"

"Honestly, Horton, I feel desperately uncomfortable about it. There is ever so much money in that purse. It may belong to some girl who has been saving up for a long time, just as I have. Don't you think that I ought to advertise it?"

"No, decidedly not. Listen. Supposing you did advertise: 'Found on elevated train, a plain black pocketbook, containing roll of bills;' how could you ever be sure of finding the right woman? Don't you see, there is nothing to identify the purse by? It is just like a hundred others. You would have to give it up to the first claimant who was lucky enough to guess anywhere near the right amount. In your place I would rather stretch a point and keep my findings than run the risk of being swindled out of them."

Sybil stared up at him in open amazement. "Why, you wouldn't have me keep the money, to spend for myself?"

"To be sure I would. I tell you what, Sybil, it looks to me as though fate had tried to reward you for all your hard work by dropping a sort of special prize of merit in your lap. Don't look so terribly solemn. Take it as a sort of anonymous wedding-present. Here comes my train. Good-by. Don't be foolish. Go and blow it all in for extra peacock feathers!"

"I wonder whether you are in earnest," the girl said uncertainly, but, with a wave of his hand and a contented laugh, he had boarded his train and left her. As she merged in the human tide that drifted sluggishly down the narrow stairs of the elevated station, Sybil found herself still wondering whether Horton really meant that she would be justified in using this money, which some one else had lost. She did not mean to use it, she told herself; yet the fact that Horton, usually so punctilious about money matters, thought that it would be right, naturally influenced her strongly. The color scheme in one of the great show-windows on the avenue suddenly banished the ethics of honesty from her thoughts. Broadcloths, silks, and velvets, flung with the studied carelessness of long practise, cut wide swaths of color—purples, pinks, and greens of the newest tints, melting off from dark to light, in chromatic scales of shades. Certain chosen pieces, the gems of the collection in color and weave, were draped around the lay figures in the window,

with a fluent symmetry of graceful folds, a glove-like tension over the hips, that no art of the modiste could duplicate, emphasizing to the full the sheen and richness of the fabrics.

It was the week of "Autumn Openings," of "Anniversary Sales," "Comparison Sales," "Million-Dollar Sales"; the week of flamboyant advertising and spectacular displays; the week consecrated to the vast modern temples of Mammon—the department-stores. As the revolving-door, its rubber edges purring softly against varnished wood, propelled her swiftly from the crisp October air without, into the soft, warm redolence of the great bazaar, laden with the incense of fashion, the blending odors of perfume and sachet, the pungent civet of expensive furs, the clinging hall-mark of dye-vat and of loom, Sybil paused for a moment, drawing her breath a little more quickly than was her wont. Instinctively her fingers tightened upon the handle of the shopping-bag, that held impartially the money that was rightly hers, the money that was not. North and south and west, like so many shrines for the cult of each separate feminine vanity, the counters stretched in unbroken sequence of tempting opulence. Before her the department of veils and laces, with its suggestiveness of bridals, offered a special enticement. From shelves and brackets and polished rods clouds of gossamer veilings—turquoise, amethyst, and opaline—filled the air with shimmering mists; and just beyond waved billowy laces, nettings, fancy gauzes, sheer-spangled fairy fabrics, white with silver crescents, black with golden stars. Next, the ribbon counter interposed a dash of rainbow coloring, intensifying by contrast the whiteness of the handkerchiefs that lay in a bank of cambric snowflakes just beyond. Across the aisle, a galaxy of gloves, like slim, elongated, Botticelli hands, seemed to beckon and invite: smart tans and russets for walking and driving; long, crumply suèdes, in azure, pink, and pearl; gloves for dinners and for teas, gloves for ball and opera, gloves for bridesmaids and for brides. And everywhere, radiating between the ranks of columns, avenues of broadcloth, satin, and brocade; distant vistas of dainty feminine apparel, beribboned and belaced; stockings, shoes, and hats, feathers and flowers, each and all offering their special seductions and appeals.

To the girl, in her exalted mood, the lengthening vistas of these avenues seemed to merge into the rose-tinted world of dreams. As she stood gazing, in a pleasurable thrill of anticipation, with vague snatches of Mendelssohn floating through her brain, she felt, as never before, the reality, the imminence of her happiness. Yet while she looked and longed, the money that she had not earned, the money that was not hers, seemed to burn in her possession. She had not yet decided to spend it, yet the knowledge that it was there, an extra resource in emergency, seemed curiously to blur her moral judgment, her sense of right and wrong. It represented an added power of acquisitiveness; it meant that just so much more of all this dazzling show might become hers for the asking.

Resolutely she turned her back upon the things she most longed for, and began by satisfying her humbler needs, sobering her lyric mood with the dull prose of needles and thread, buttons, bones, and linings. But unconsciously her ambitions had expanded, her ideas had grown bigger. The potentiality of the money she was still determined not to spend played havoc with her carefully planned economy, and robbed prohibitive prices of half their terrors. Where she had meant to spend ten cents, she spent eleven and twelve with cheerful recklessness. Handkerchiefs were not on her list, yet she bought several. She allowed herself three pairs of gloves, in place of two, and when the cost of the long, creamy-white suèdes startled her into asking for something less expensive, and the saleswoman answered in colorless tones: "We carry only the one quality," she paid the price, without looking elsewhere. A modish walking-suit, skirt and coat, tailor-finished, made se-

rious inroads upon her shrinking fund; but it fitted as though made for her, save for a slight alteration in the sleeves. She wavered, laid it reluctantly aside, then turned back impulsively and paid the money down, without daring to compute how few dollars now remained for the most important purchase of all, the material for her wedding-gown.

But it was the rotunda, where the silks were shown, that was the direct cause of her undoing. Here, beneath the softened daylight, that filtered down through ground glass from above, she forgot for the time being that she had a conscience. On every side cascades of silk and satin and velvet flowed and eddied in sinuous rivers of undulant light and color. On every side, soft, new weaves, with soft, new names—Radium Silk, Eolienne, Abis Moiré, Peau de Cygne—flashed soft, new lusters into her wistful eyes. On every side eager, alert salesmen were swiftly unfolding, manipulating, extolling, alternately crumpling and smoothing the delicate tissues, and craftily enhancing the temptation of their charm. And scores of luckier women, with opulent purses, were choosing, rejecting, buying without stint. Sybil jealously watched the practised hands of a clerk measuring off yard after yard of a deep pink chiffon velour for a corpulent little woman with Titian hair. It seemed as though he never were going to stop measuring. Sybil found comfort in the thought, how hideously unbecoming that special shade of pink was going to be.

It was not for the pink velour that Sybil envied the little woman with Titian hair, but solely for her power to bid the man unfold and measure off those endless yards. The luckier women with the opulent purses were welcome to all the store contained, if they would leave her just one sumptuous piece of Peau de Cygne on which she had set her heart. Already she saw it in fancy, arraying her slim figure, and sweeping in stately folds of lengthy train up the broad church aisle behind her. It was neither a dead white nor an ivory, but something between the two, with a soft shimmer of moonlight, a luster of mother-of-pearl. The touch of it beneath her fingers was like a soft caress.

While she stood there irresolute—for the price seemed hopeless—another woman pushed impatiently in front of her, attracted by the same piece. She, too, was a girl of no more years than Sybil, but her dress, her manner, her very voice, proclaimed the ease, the nonchalance, the lifelong habit, of wealth. She symbolized all the things that Sybil had missed in life; the soft, luxurious things that every woman covets. She could buy, if she wished, endless yards of moonlit Peau de Cygne. And she plainly did wish it, for she promptly ordered twenty-five yards, to be charged and sent to the address she gave.

A minute later Sybil found herself ordering, in tones needlessly loud, another twenty-five yards of that same Peau de Cygne. It seemed to her, while speaking, as though another self, stronger than she, were giving the order; as though she were acting not quite of her own volition. It was that other self, not she, who was spending a stranger's money, while she stood by, tacitly consenting, and watched, in a dream of sensuous pleasure, as the lustrous fabric was unrolled.

"Charged or paid for?" asked the salesman. Now that the moment had come, she found that she could not force herself to take out that black seal purse and use the money. She had definitely committed herself; without it, she had not dollars enough remaining to pay for her purchase—not half enough. The silk was measured and cut off, the clerk was waiting for her answer. She temporized: "Please send it 'collect,'" and gave the address. At least she would have the afternoon in which to think it over, to quiet her scruples. And, anyway, had not Horton told her to "blow it in for extra peacock feathers"?

As she turned away, her elation slightly dashed, there was a commotion

at the adjoining trimming counter, the hasty gathering of a crowd, and she caught a glimpse of a white-faced girl who was being hurried toward one of the offices in the rear of the building. Oh, what was it? she wondered, with a sudden tightening at her heart. As if in answer to her unspoken question, a man's voice near her said: "Another shoplifter caught, I suppose. It's queer how the atmosphere of these big department-stores does undermine the foundations of a woman's honesty."

Outside, the weather had turned much colder, and there was a sense of fine rain in the air. All the brightness of the morning had vanished under a canopy of dull gray clouds, like the cloud of gloom that had shut down over her own spirits. All her instinctive appreciation of to-day as one of the rare days in a lifetime was gone. She could only say over and over to herself the random words that she had caught from a stranger's conversation: "How the big department-stores undermine the foundations of a woman's honesty!" Was she any better than that white-faced shoplifter? she asked herself in sudden self-scorn. She had broken no written law, she could not be arrested or hurried back into a private office, to be cross-questioned, threatened, searched, perhaps. But in her own heart she was a thief. She had in her keeping money that was not her own; and though she had not yet paid it out, she had meant to use it. She knew now that somewhere in her soul had lurked the intent to use it ever since she first entered the store. All those hours, pushed back out of sight, somewhere in her brain, she had harbored the deliberate intent of theft!

With fresh contrition, she remembered how rashly she had told Horton that she would rather steal than take money from him. It seemed now that she had spoken more truly than she knew. Well, she was punished for it now, and the hardest part of all would be to tell him what she had done. Of course Horton had not been in earnest when he told her to spend the money; he had been only teasing her, of course; that was why he had laughed so oddly. It was not quite like Horton to tease about such matters, not quite kind of him to tempt her. But perhaps he had been trying to test her, trying to gage the moral standards of a girl who would rather steal than take his money—good, generous Horton's money! She knew now that she would rather take his money a hundred times over than endure the shame, the self-reproach, the utter abjection of her present mood. Perhaps, she thought, he might even be ashamed, disappointed, utterly disgusted with her when he came to hear the story of her day.

It was a faint comfort to know that as yet nothing was irrevocable. At least, she need not keep the silk; she could refuse to pay for it when it came to-night, and let them carry it back—carry back all that beautiful, shimmering Peau de Cygne, carry back her realized dream of a wedding-dress. She turned her face to the car window and pretended to look out through the pane already blurred by the fine, driving mist. A big tear gathered and crept down her cheek, to be brushed surreptitiously away. Another tear crept after it, and fell unheeded upon the crumpled parcel of old taffeta, which she had forgotten even to try to match. With the ready exaggeration of youth, she felt her desolation to be measureless.

When Horton called that evening, fully half-an-hour earlier than usual, he found a woful Niobe awaiting him, her left hand holding tight a moist, limp handkerchief, crumpled to a useless ball. His first alarm changed to a bewildered consternation when he gathered, from her incoherent outburst, that the cause of her dismal face and reddened eyelids was the modest black seal purse they had found that morning in the car.

"Why, Sybil, I had no idea you would take my little joke like that! I always seem to be wounding you when I least intend to."

"It wasn't that, Horton. It was nothing you had done. You don't half understand about it yet. You will

despise me when you know. I was going to keep that money."

"A very sensible decision to come to. But if you are going to make yourself unhappy about it, I would rather have you burn the wretched pocketbook up, money and all. I have been half afraid, all day, that you wouldn't be willing to keep it."

The girl shrank from him, almost in physical distress. "Please, Horton, don't joke about it any more. I can't quite bear it. I have felt like a thief all day—such a mean, contemptible sort of thief. I kept wondering how the poor woman feels who lost that money. Perhaps she needed it, oh, ever so much more than I did! Perhaps it was the money for her rent, and they may be putting her out now, this very moment, in all this drizzling rain."

The man caught both her hands in his, as she raised them to her face, to shut out the wraith of tragedy she had conjured up. His whole face expressed amazement, struggling with the keenest self-reproach. "Why, Sybil, you poor child, you don't mean to say you have been torturing yourself all day with that sort of nonsense? Don't you understand, there is no other woman? I thought you would see through my clumsy little trick the moment you opened the pocketbook. Do you mean to tell me that you didn't open it at all? Go and get it. Where is your proper feminine curiosity?"

On the lining of the outer flap, stamped in slender letters of gold, were the three initials, "S. W. B." The girl repeated them, wonderingly.

"Don't you understand, you silly child, who those initials stand for? You told me often enough that I had no right to give you money, so I thought I wouldn't have your initials put in the pocketbook. I had it stamped with the initials of my future wife, Sybil W. Bruce. It isn't your pocketbook, it is hers. I guess I have a right to put as much money as I please into my own wife's pocketbook."

Sybil's pale face suddenly flushed, then went quite pale again, under the sense of a strain removed, as the truth dawned upon her. "I have been ridiculously dense," she said, between tears and laughter. "I never dreamed for a moment that you would be guilty of such a subterfuge."

"I brought the pocketbook with me this morning, meaning to give it to you when I said good-by. But you were in such an unapproachable mood about money that I didn't dare to give it to you directly. It was a thoughtless sort of a trick, and an unkind one, as things turned out."

"I was horrid to you, Horton, and said things that I didn't really mean. I didn't know till afterward how little I did mean them."

She had barely finished a chronicle of the day's happenings when the bell rang—the bell that for the last five hours she had been dreading to hear, announcing the arrival of her purchases. She came back from the door, her arms laden with bundles, big and little. "Horton," she said shamefacedly, "I want you to decide something for me. The man is waiting with the bill for the Peau de Cygne. What shall I do about it—send it back?"

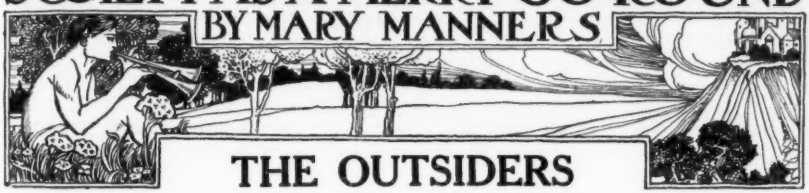
"You are really not angry with me for my tactlessness?" he asked in reply. "Then prove it by borrowing the money out of my future wife's pocketbook. You can return it when you make her acquaintance next November."

Sybil returned a moment later, tightly holding her receipt, as though fearful that it would be taken away from her. "Horton," she said, staying his hand as he was in the act of severing the string that bound the long, slim package that had cost her all her heartache, "before you open that I want to make a confession. I am not sorry for one single thing that happened to-day, because I know now how very much nicer it is to—take money from you than it is to—steal it!"

"If you have learned so much wisdom," cried Horton, crushing girl and package together in one joyous, comprehensive embrace, "then bless the man who invented Peau de Cygne!"

SOCIETY AS A MERRY-GO-ROUND

BY MARY MANNERS



THE OUTSIDERS

THEIR name is legion, and a great many of them are anything but dissatisfied with their position. Some of them do not care; it just amuses them to look on, with, perhaps, no more than a glance over their shoulders as they go about their businesses. Some of them think they are having all the fun there is, on their own accounts. You see them doing everything the Merry-go-rounders do, with an air of dauntless determination and the aspect of perfect prosperity. They secure the best boxes at the opera, the horse-show, the theaters, and fill them to overflowing with their friends. The women dress more gorgeously and behave more circumspectly in public places than the real fashionables. The men are apparently very conscious of their evening clothes and their manners, and show a disposition to bolster each other up with a slap on the back when they are observed, and to talk business in corners when they are not. They give large parties at whatever restaurants are the mode of the moment. They frequent the race-tracks, and you think, from their general outline, that they are going to be somebody you know, and find from their particular details that you were surprisingly mistaken. They support the hotels and the shops, ordering lavishly and paying promptly, and they seem to be quite content with the fact that they can, and do, command the best that New York supplies in the way of luxury and amusement. The society of their friends and the friends of their friends is amply sufficient, and that it could confer any glory upon them to be intimate with those favored few whose names are constantly extolled in the newspapers, they would not for a moment admit. They like to know them by sight, and to condemn what they hear of them; an attitude not without its advantages.

But there are others, some simple and some sophisticated, who look with envious eyes upon that august body once known as "The Four Hundred," and long to be with and of them: suddenly enriched Captains of Industry and Princes of Progress, whose wives and daughters are ambitious for social advancement, and whose American spirit of shrewdness and enterprise will not let them stop short of the best, or what they consider the best, when time and money are about to be invested. They may not succeed in their endeavors to force an entrance, or they may force an entrance and never find a place, but they are determined to have "a try at it."

Perhaps it would be more just to call them "aspirants," rather than "outsiders," for the latter name suggests none of the eager desire to be whirling with the dizziest in the midst of the show, which characterizes this especial class. You may be "outside" and acquiescent, but you cannot "aspire" and contentedly forego your aim.

Mrs. Silverton, buxom, black-haired, and only a little ruddier in complexion than she used to be as a girl, puts the thing pointedly to her husband—called her "old man" and "Pa" in the family circle.

"Abe," she says, "when a man can afford himself and his wife and daughter

the best of anything, it's up to him to get it, isn't it? Would you be for smoking a poor cigar when you can pay for a good one? Or living in a shanty when you can hire some one to build you a grand house?"

"No," says Mr. Silverton meditatively; "I don't know as I would."

"I know very well you wouldn't," asserts Mrs. Silverton decidedly, "for it isn't your disposition. And no more is it mine, neither. When I see folks carrying themselves high, and making out that they're having the best that's going, and there's no one in it but themselves, I'm bound to get there, too, and see what it's like."

"You be careful who you get to show you around," warns Mr. Silverton. "I don't want to be in the position of the Chinaman who served a year with a family to learn English and found it was German!"

He grins, and Mrs. Silverton chuckles and goes off to announce to her daughter that the game is won, so far as "Pa" and the funds are concerned.

Juliet—pronounced Juli*et* by her mother—is three-quarters glad and one-quarter sorry. She is—surreptitiously—"as good as engaged" to a handsome, dark, melancholy-eyed young neighbor, who sings tenor in the church-choir, and is the admired of many maidens. How can she bear to leave him and his romantic attachment, for the "gay life of the metropolis"? It never occurs to her that you may sojourn in the metropolis for many months and be anything but gay. So she takes several lingering farewells of *Romeo,* whose real name is Paul Givingston Shinn, and the Silvertons shake the dust of their native town from their feet and advance to the storming of New York and the capturing of a place in the Merry-go-round.

There is no one but Paul's mother—and she would not so far demean herself—to tell them that if they would stay at home and let their daughter marry her son—whose father's incompetence and poverty alone led his family into exile—they would find themselves connected, through *her,* with most of those famous names, the owners of which it is their ardent desire to meet. No, indeed, Mrs. Shinn thinks to herself with a smile, it would be too good a joke altogether if they found that out in time! She has other views for Paul. She never approved of that pink-faced little chit, whose manners are only a shade less second-rate than her mother's. She wishes *her* son to marry among his own people. She hopes her influence will procure him a lucrative position—a position, that is, which his talents will render lucrative—in the midst of that center of finance where the late Mr. Shinn managed to make so signal a failure.

There is nobody to tell the poor lady, in her turn, that the ancient relations who have not forgotten her have long since been forgotten by the whirling world, and that the people now in power, fashionably and financially, are some of them persons whom she would have looked down upon in her youth, many of them utterly unknown to her, and all of them quite indifferent to any claims she could put forth that are not of the day and the hour. And the day and the hour claims are not those that depend upon gentle lineage and a retiring disposition, both of which attributes Paul undoubtedly possesses. He is no more capable of carving out a career for himself than he is of flying. He is merely a quiet, dreamy, scholarly, trustworthy young gentleman, with beautiful brown eyes and a delicious voice; admirably fitted to be the husband of an energetic little heiress who wants to "get on"—or, rather, "in," since it is the way of outsiders to speak of society as if it were a wall to be scaled, a circus for which tickets purchased on the sidewalk are found to be useless, or even a wagon that might at a moment's notice start off and leave them.

Unfortunately, the heiress evidently designed by circumstances for Paul has been spirited away; not entirely without her own consent, but principally at the will of her mother, who has no more liking for Mrs. Shinn's son than Mrs. Shinn has for her daughter. But the Silvertons are not finding it quite so

easy to fight their way into the Merry-go-round as they supposed. The place seems to be pretty crowded already, and they have no very especial inducements to offer that would attract attention. Miss Juliet is nice looking, but so are a hundred other equally gifted young ladies. Her father is rich, and her mother good-natured; they are not a bit more common than a number of astonishing recruits whom society has taken to its bosom, but they do not know how to *do* things, and they have not yet found just the person to teach them.

The Riders are a very impatient set of people. It is as well to learn that at the start. They will not stop *en masse* and wait for you to inform yourself how they play the game. You have got to get yourself instructed in some quiet place apart, and then, if they give you any encouragement, you may enter suddenly with a knowing war-whoop, and fling yourself upon your horse while your sponsor holds the bridle. One trouble with the Silvertons is that they have had no sponsor—nobody to go about among the members of the magic circle and say:

"Dear me, don't you know the Silvertons? They're really awfully good fun. The old gentleman made his fortune in oil, or oleomargarin, or something of that sort. The mother is a nice, downright woman, and the daughter is quite charming, pretty and agreeable, and all that, you know. A little harsh with her R's, talks about 'fatherr's worrks,' but as she's sure to inherit the proceeds, her speech will be silver and her silence golden, as the proverb says, and the sooner you can secure her for your Tom"—or Jack or Harry, as the case may be—"the better for you, my dear."

To which the particular member addressed may respond by admitting that a well-to-do wife would admirably suit the impecunious Tom, but that "he's so fastidious and hard to please—one really can't count upon him"; or may mask design under an affectation of indifference, and languidly consent to call upon the young lady's mother and leave cards indicating that she will be at home herself to them on a certain day; or may be frankly good-natured and ask them to something because she has been begged to do so; or, equally frankly, bored to death at the idea of having new and not too congenial acquaintances forced upon her.

All these things may happen if you have a sponsor; some one who knows something about you and is willing to take a little trouble for you. But if you have not, you won't even get far enough for the Merry-go-round people to make up their minds that they *don't* want to know you. You will not even exist for them.

This the Silvertons are gradually finding out. The big house that "Pa" has commissioned the agents to secure for him, is empty of guests. The box at the opera contains only himself and his females. In vain does he once or twice a week perform the act known to him as "busting into a pair of white gloves" and endeavor to make himself an all-sufficient background for the brilliant toilets of the ladies. The whole party have a stranded look; as if they had been dropped from a balloon into a foreign country and were not any too sure about the intentions of the inhabitants. Only once is the right hand of fellowship held out to them, and that is when a near-sighted, nervous gentleman stumbles in one evening and greets them warmly under the impression that they are the "odd night" tenants, who are dear friends of his own, and who departs in agonized embarrassment, deploring the stockholders' thrifty habit of renting boxes to alternate occupants. It begins to occur to "Pa" that the family do not resemble the Chinaman even to the extent of learning to speak German.

Things improve when Mrs. Silverton is recognized by a lady with whom she once crossed in the steamer; a lady who, indeed, owed her crossing to the fact that Mr. Silverton gave up his cabin to her, and who has not forgotten it. To her Miss Juliet's mama artlessly confides her aspirations. Through her the Silvertons meet a few, a very few, of

the people their minds are set upon meeting. The people ignore them, more or less; civilly but, to the sensitive soul, unmistakably. Mrs. Silverton ignores being ignored, and in course of time she makes a little headway. It is at least acknowledged that she exists. One or two young men drop into the chairs behind Juliet at the opera. "Pa" no longer has to "bust into his white gloves" to be their constant escort. But they are by no means in the real Merry-go-round yet. They have only pushed their way into the first row of Watchers, so to speak. Juliet has no friends of her own age, no girls to giggle with, as she had in her native town. There are a few young women who return her bow with a pleasant but slightly puzzled air, as if they were amiably confused as to her identity, but she has not munched a caramel or discussed a novelette hero in company with kindred spirits since she left Drillerstown. Her letters home have an undercurrent of loneliness, for all their surface sparkle. It has taken the ardor out of her triumphs, present and future, to learn that Paul Givingston Shinn, instead of remaining quietly in his place to hear about them, has, at his mother's instigation—as she at hers—departed some time since for New York, where, contrary to his expressions of undying attachment, he has been, apparently, content to reside without in any way calling himself to her remembrance. She has seen nobody, so far, to compare with Paul in what she calls "elegance." She has always held him in her imagination as the image of that romance which every princess of finance may be called upon to give up when she comes into her kingdom. But, really, when the kingdom does not seem disposed to welcome the princess, and the romance has deserted her, she must be excused for wondering if the game is worth the candle.

There are times when Juliet feels this very strongly. She would like to write to Paul and assure him that she has not succeeded in placing herself so far beyond his reach after all; that her mother will not forever forbid Opulence to wed with Obscurity—of course she does not present this quite so baldly even to herself; that there is no reason why she should not afford herself the dearest—his disappearance has about convinced her that it *is* the dearest—wish of her heart, etc., etc., if only she knew where to find him! But it is sometimes difficult for Opulence to pursue Obscurity. Miss Silverton does not exactly care to apply to Mrs. Shinn for information as to the locality in which her son is hiding himself and his broken heart; and where else is she to turn? She wouldn't for the world have any of her former associates know that she *doesn't* know. Fashionable success, of even the very limited kind she has been enjoying, has its drawbacks! She tells herself that but for this Paul would not have feared to approach her. She is not yet entirely conscious how far she is from the center of things.

And at this point fate steps merrily in and procures for the Silvertons invitations to a music-loving lady's house, to hear the singing of a new and much-belauded tenor. These good people, only a step or two advanced from the outermost ranks, have not, for obvious reasons, been attending the parties given by the innermost for themselves and each other; they are consequently ignorant of the favored warbler's name—which they would have heard a score of times had they achieved the fashionable intimacies they hoped for—and are shocked, stunned, amazed, "astonied" —like Daniel—"for the space of an hour," to find in the observed of all observers, no other than Paul Givingston Shinn!

There he is, beautiful, dreamy-eyed, singing like an angel; not quite so oblivious as he used to be of the rapturous glances cast upon him by the sentimental fair. His mother's "influence" having proved of no avail, he has been put to sore straits, poor young man, for a means of livelihood, and, rather than go back to her and confess himself beaten, has taken advantage of his one talent and turned it to account. Having once made a success with his voice—and his eyes—he begins to find his

name—the middle name with which Mrs. Shinn has thought it necessary to label him *hers*—of more assistance than he thought it could be when he first tested the tenderness of the strange city. Such of his relations as have not altogether dropped out of the running find the Paul Givingston Shinn who commands praise and high prices a very different person from the Paul Givingston Shinn who wearied them with importunities to put him—somehow—into business. The Riders in the Merry-go-round really have not time to be interested—or disinterested, for that matter—when the pace gets hot, and those connected with Paul happen to have all they can do to hang on themselves. But they can still clap when they see other people clapping, and murmur confidentially where it will do most good: "Upon my word, the young fellow's a genius. Mary Givingston's boy, you know. She married a man named Shinn."

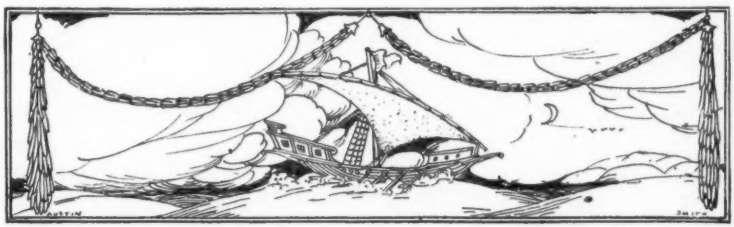
Sometimes the great lady addressed will *not* know, having acquired her place in the Merry-go-round long after Mary Givingston ceased to be a Rider; but she will like to pretend she does, for, oddly enough, in a society where individual contribution to the general amusement counts most in your favor, there is still a slight interest manifested in the unknown bearers of a once well-known name—especially among those who have no claim to that barren honor.

So Paul becomes the fashion, and prospers. And Juliet and her mother, beholding him in this—to them—unworthy position—for an "artist" is, in their eyes, only a talented sort of menial to be hired—suffer agonies. By and by it begins to dawn upon them that the young man is flattered and courted by the very people *they* would flatter and court; successfully, no doubt, if they only knew how. But they do not know how. They have not the good taste to be simply themselves, and society hates its poor imitators. The very wave of popularity that carries Paul onward drags back the Silvertons, for it somehow gets about that they knew him intimately in the seclusion of Drillerstown, and were in two minds about recognizing him when they discovered the nature of his occupation here.

"Such airs from oleomargarin, my dear!" says society, overlooking the unkindness.

And after that it is all up with the Silvertons. They have made themselves ridiculous, and that is fatal. They will return to Drillerstown the bitterer for their worldly knowledge, and they will never understand why they failed to plant themselves securely in the desired places.

Perhaps the fickle fancy of the Riders will turn from Paul, the tenor. They certainly will not encourage his attentions to any of their charming daughters, however ready they may be to welcome him as an agreeable addition to the Merry-go-round. He would have to be a great deal more celebrated than he is before he could command a sufficient fortune to commend him as a matrimonial investment. No. He had far better—and probably he will—return to his oleomargarin princess while she is in a chastened state of mind, and learn to exist happily in the first ranks of the Outsiders.



The Age of Wisdom

BY JOSEPH C. LINCOLN

SOMETIMES when things look sort of black and tangled-up and troubled,
When all the joy seems cut in ha'f and all the worry doubled;
When fifty years' experience and learnin's jest a smatter,
Not even good enough to tell exactly what's the matter;
And when you've thought of "how" and "why" until your brains are frothin',
And all you're really sure of is that you ain't sure of nothin'—
It makes you sigh to think of days when you had wisdom, plenty.
And knew it all, and *knew* you knew—the days when you was twenty.

The days when you'd become a man—a *man!* please don't forget it!
When Time had wound the old earth up and sent for you to set it;
When ma was nice, but apt to let old-fogy notions rule her—
It made you sad sometimes to see how easy 'twas to fool her;
When father was a "good old tad," who preached of thrift and riches,
But couldn't see how needful 'twas to own eight pairs of britches;
When Bub and Sis were "noisy kids" who ought to have obeyed you;
And you—good land! why, you was *you!* The mold was smashed that made you.

The days when all the pretty girls was queens and you could name 'em;
You knew they stared when you went past, and—well, you couldn't blame 'em.
The days when things that counted most was clothes and drives and dances;
And trifles such as work and cash, they had to take their chances.
The time when, big cigar in mouth and chesty as a pigeon,
You casu'lly hove out remarks on gov'ment or religion,
And, havin' straightened every kink, all creeds but yours a-scornin',
You dressed and primped two hours or more, went out, and danced till mornin'.

Ah hum! you're fifty now, and still life's thread has knots upon it;
The old earth would have spun, you guess, if you'd not landed on it:
You ain't so sure that dad was slow and ma too blind to spot you
When *your* boy tries the same old tricks and thinks, dead sure, he's got you.
You watch him with his clothes, cigars, and girls too thick to mention;
You listen, meek and humble, while he sprinkles condescension;
And then you smoke your pipe and grin—you've been there good and plenty;
You've had your own brave, foolish days—the days when you was twenty.

A CLOSED INCIDENT



BY VINCENT HARPER

GO to the devil, will you, Tooth!"

Instead, Tooth went over to the fireplace and hung Mr. Courtneay's pale pink pajamas on the backs of two chairs before the blazing logs.

"Thanks," said Mr. Courtneay, when Tooth came back and enabled him to get his hand into the sleeve of his quilted satin smoking-jacket, which he had been making profane and ineffectual efforts to do for some time. "What time is it?"

"Gone two, sir," replied Tooth, pushing Mr. Courtneay's armchair closer to the table and otherwise wasting time in a way that indicated that he did not take seriously that gentleman's request that he drop the subject to which he had ventured to allude.

Mr. Courtneay knocked the ashes out of his pipe, yawned as he refilled and lit it, dropped into the chair, took up the volume of Rousseau, and opened it at the place where a woman's riding-glove showed that he had stopped reading last night.

"What time did you say it was, Tooth?" asked Mr. Courtneay, after reading two or three pages without looking up, and not at all as though he intended to hear what time it was or cared anything about the time one way or another.

"Gone two, sir," replied Tooth again, speaking rather more quietly than usual, and addressing not Mr. Courtneay in particular, but as if making a general statement to all whom it might concern.

It evidently did not concern Mr. Courtneay, for he went on reading. If anything ever concerned Mr. Courtneay, no one ever learned that fact from Mr. Courtneay. His man, Tooth, if testifying to what he had personally observed during three years of intimate service, must have sworn that his master was quite incapable of concern. In fact, not the least of Tooth's sorrows—gentlemen's gentlemen are a sorrowful body as a rule, and Tooth's manner suggested incurable melancholia—not the least of his sorrows was due to his gentleman's seeming blissful inability to show feeling of any sort at any time, even when, from Tooth's point of view, diplomacy, to say nothing of ethics, demanded it. Such an occasion had now arisen. Acute situations call for heroic, even revolutionary, measures. The situation was acute, desperate. Tooth felt that he must act. He fully appreciated the delicacy of his position, also the fact that Mr. Courtneay cherished a feeling amounting to reverence for the best English traditions, which traditions involve the assumption that all servants are deaf and dumb. While Tooth, it is true, possessed normal organs of speech and hearing, in the straitest sect of that vocation he had lived a valet, having acquired his really superb repose and his mastery of technique in the service of young Lord Sholto de Brewe, Mr. Courtneay's brother-in-law. It was with a clear understanding of the revolutionary nature of any such unthinkable impertinence, therefore, that he now approached his gentleman with a view to discussing a subject no less ticklish than Mr. Courtneay's relations with Mrs. Freddy Broome, at whose

place near Asheville Mr. Courtneay was one of a score of over-the-holidays guests.

"Beg pardon, sir," murmured Tooth, fetching a pair of curiously wrought moccasins, "but shall I lay off your boots?" Mr. Courtneay extended a foot in the direction of Tooth.

"Thank you, sir," said Tooth to the patent-leather evening shoe, which he began to unbutton, while Mr. Courtneay, manifestly not aware of the exact cause of the relief which his corn experienced, accepted the relief unquestioningly, and proceeded with his enjoyment of the delightful "Confessions."

"Beg pardon, sir," ventured Tooth once more, after slipping the moccasins over the unconsciously grateful feet of his gentleman, who became gradually conscious of a feeling of comfort as his toes luxuriated in the mink lining of the moccasins, and then, dimly, that Tooth was trying to attract his attention.

"Did you say something?" asked Mr. Courtneay finally, after Tooth had begged his pardon a number of times.

"Beg pardon, sir," replied Tooth, with not a trace of exultation over his triumph in succeeding in establishing the fact of his existence, "but, as I was syin' a momint ago, very 'igh words was parsin' back and forth, sir, between Mrs. Broome's myde and Mr. Broome's man; very 'igh words, indeed, sir; somethink hawful, in fact—in the servints' 'all, sir."

"Are you drunk?" asked Mr. Courtneay, laying down his book and looking at Tooth. No less an authority than Fordy March had warned him that the best of servants suffer a sea change in coming to America, but Tooth's degeneracy was so sudden.

"Thank you, sir," replied Tooth, "but I 'aven't tysted a drop, sir; not a drop. But it were hawful, sir, the wye Mr. Broome's man and Mrs. Broome's myde was parsin' 'igh words back and forth, sir, right in the servints' 'all—shymeful, sir, properly!"

"Were *they* drunk?" inquired Mr. Courtneay, beginning to lose interest, and trying to find his place in the "Confessions."

"Hoh, my! no, sir!" exclaimed Tooth, waxing bolder under the fear that Mr. Courtneay had again forgotten the trifling fact of his existence. "Mr. Broome's man were as sober as anythink; likewise Mrs. Broome's myde, sir; but they did go on somethink disgryceful, the myde insistin' as 'ow Mr. Bupp—'e's Mr. Broome's man, you know, sir—were as blind as a——"

"You may go to bed, Tooth; I shan't need you," yawned Mr. Courtneay, shutting off the confessions of Tooth and turning to those of Rousseau; but Tooth was not to be yawned down.

"Beg pardon, Mr. Courtneay, sir," he said, speaking with so much assurance that Mr. Courtneay actually listened, although he did control the impulse to look up, and went on reading; "but I thought as 'ow you might not know that Mrs. Spencer-Creighton is leaving in 'arf-an-hour, sir; very suddin like, sir."

"What the dev——" exclaimed Mr. Courtneay, starting, in spite of his lifelong aversion to all show of feeling, but instantly checking himself and drawling: "What gentlemen were in the card-room just now when you went to fetch my——"

"Your heye-glarsis, sir?" supplied Tooth, when Mr. Courtneay forgot what he was saying, and began to read again. "Honly Mr. Broome and Lord 'Erbert and Mr. Foster and Captain Wilberforce was plyin', sir, and Mr. March and Mr. Ackers was standin' lookin' on, sir, and Major 'Artopp 'e were readin' by the fire, sir."

"By the way, Tooth," murmured Mr. Courtneay, after having read for at least three minutes by the clock, "do you happen to know if Major Hartopp has gone to bed yet?"

"I was just syin' as 'ow Major 'Artopp were readin' by the fire in the card-room, sir."

Another long silence ensued, during which Mr. Courtneay laughed aloud over some peculiarly toothsome morsel of self-undoing on the part of the immortal vivisectionist, and when he

spoke, finally, it was with abruptness, as if he had just thought of the matter.

"Oh, I say, Tooth, if you don't mind, you might go and see if Major Hartopp is still up, and ask him to look in here before he goes to bed."

"Very good, sir," replied Tooth, turning at the door to say: "Beg pardon, sir, but Mrs. Broome's myde were that hindignint along of w'at Mr. Broome's man said, that she said as 'ow she would tell Mrs. Broome; and Mrs. Spencer-Creighton's myde—French, sir, and 'ysterical accordin'—goes orf 'er 'ead, and flies up to tell Mrs. Spencer-Creighton, sir, and I 'ear that the lydy is leavin', sir, in 'arf-an-hour, sir."

"Oh, by the way, Tooth," said Mr. Courtneay from the middle of the eighteenth century, "I shan't need you — you might go to bed. Just see if Major Hartopp is about, will you?"

Tooth stepped out into the corridor and shut the door. Instantly a great change came over master and man. Tooth relaxed the funereal expression on his face, and held a heated whispered parley with a French maid whom he had surprised very close to the door—at its keyhole, in fact; and Mr. Courtneay jumped to his feet and kicked off one moccasin after the other to distant corners of the room, tore off his smoking-jacket, got into his dinner-coat, and then scribbled a brief but evidently weighty note, which he took with his own hands and slipped under a door far down the corridor, at which he tapped vigorously, and then retreated in hot haste to his own room. His mysterious maneuver was executed none too swiftly, for he had scarcely dropped into his chair and resumed his reading when Major Hartopp knocked and entered without waiting for Courtneay's sleepy "Come in!"

"Your undertaker made the melancholy announcement that you wanted to see me. Divulge!" said the major, a thick-set, iron-gray, perfectly poised man of fifty, with the voice of an Oxford recluse, the muscles and back of the old 'cross-country huntsman that he was, and the repose which comes of having certain old-fashioned ideals of what is a gentleman, twenty thousand a year, and nothing but a sacredly buried memory to disturb his emotional equilibrium. "Rousseau, eh? At three in the morning? Liver a bit seedy?"

"Confessions are in order—with a vengeance. Want to hear mine, major?" laughed Courtneay, innocently fancying that thirty can palm off on fifty its notion of repose for the genuine article.

"Nothing serious, I hope, dear boy," replied the major, disliking Courtneay's manner, under which the old veteran thought that he detected ominous signs of agitation.

"Well, Hartopp," began Courtneay, pushing the major into his armchair and standing with his back to the fire, "to be perfectly frank with you——"

"Possibly the wisest course," interrupted the major, busy with his cigar, the cutting of the little notch in which was with him a very nice operation; "so fire away, old chap!"

"I'm a damn' fool, major," announced Courtneay, after a thoughtful pause.

"I know it," murmured the major approvingly. "I was one at your age. Chronic or acute?"

"Chronic tendency, and just now acute attack—devilish bad, let me tell you! Fact is, I'm in love!"

"So was I at your age. Symptoms?"

"But I'm in no end of a hole, major! You see——"

"Yes, I fear that everybody has seen it. It's none of my business, but you have sometimes allowed me to presume upon the extent of my bald spot, Courtneay, and to give you advice. Broome is the best fellow in the world—he could hardly be more magnanimous if he loved, really loved, her—but don't you really think that you are placing Mrs. Broome in a rather ugly light? Last night's excursion was deucedly near to being beastly bad form."

Courtneay roared.

The major smoked on placidly, turning over the pages of the "Confessions" until Courtneay laughed himself out. Then the two looked calmly at each other.

"So you've noticed it, have you?" asked Courtneay, beginning to laugh again.

"I have eyes," answered the major. "Also, I occasionally read novels. Item, I don't like all this sort of thing—no more do you, Courtneay, in the bottom of your heart."

"But, good heavens, major! you don't for a moment suppose that I would be such an unconscionable idiot as to make love to a woman in this egregiously violent fashion under her husband's very nose, unless——"

"Beg pardon, sir," said Tooth, coming in and betraying most unprofessional and uncharacteristic excitement, "but could I speak to you, sir, in private, sir, on somethink of the larst himportance?"

"Major Hartopp and I were just discussing it," replied Mr. Courtneay, "so you may speak to me here, Tooth. Sit down, Hartopp. The plot thickens. Now, Tooth, what is it?"

"Beggin' your pardon, sir, and Major 'Artopp's likewise," stammered Tooth, "but French mydes goes orf their 'eads somethink hawful!"

Neither the major nor Mr. Courtneay objected to this general proposition. Tooth reddened, gave signs of being about to draw some inference from his major premise, coughed, choked, and relapsed into perspiring silence.

"Perhaps I would better come back later," suggested the major, rising.

"No! Sit down, major, please. Now, Tooth, you donkey, out with it! I take it that you refer to Mrs. Spencer-Creighton's maid. I think I told you what I feel about international marriages. Has Mademoiselle Lucile——"

"Oh, I say!" pleaded the major, when Tooth retreated into the bedroom under cover of taking thither the pajamas and moccasins. "Let up on the poor devil, can't you?"

"I beg your pardon, Tooth," said Courtneay on Tooth's reappearance. "You wanted to say something to me?"

"Yes, sir," replied Tooth, relieved and encouraged by a genial nod from the major. "I were about to sye, sir, that Mrs. Spencer-Creighton's myde has just told me as 'ow her lydy were packin' up for to leave the 'ouse immediate, when she were took with a fit of cryin', and she do be goin' on somethink 'arrowin', sir, and the myde—French, you know, sir, and that 'oity-toity as nothink won't 'old 'er when she goes orf—the myde, sir, ayn't the one as will 'elp the poor lydy much. If you, sir, and Major 'Artopp will 'ave the goodniss to step into the passage, you can 'ear them 'arrowin' femyles now, sir. And hevery lydy in the 'ole 'ouse is ringin' bells and arskin' their mydes if it's burglars or what, sir!"

"I'll be back in a moment, Hartopp," said Courtneay, hurrying out of the room before the major had time to advise against anything hasty being done in a situation which began to look serious.

"What seems to be the matter, Tooth? You may speak with perfect freedom, for Mr. Courtneay sent for me to discuss things with him. Is Mrs. Spencer-Creighton ill?" asked the major. He denied himself the luxury of keeping a man, never having overcome his love of privacy or his repugnance to having any one present when he performed his toilet, and so his attitude toward all servants was one of indiscreet kindness and frankness.

"Hillness, sir?" repeated Tooth, coming much nearer to the major than he ever ventured to approach Mr. Courtneay. "Not as I knows of, sir. Mrs. Spencer-Creighton were at dinner, Mr. Wilkins, the butler, says, and 'er myde says as 'ow the lydy were still plyin' bridge at 'arf-parst twelve this hevenin', sir. No, Major 'Artopp, sir, it ayn't hillness, sir, that is the matter with the lydy, but the 'igh words as was parsin' back and forth, sir, between Mr. Broome's man and Mrs. Broome's myde in the servints' 'all to-night, sir. Myself and Lord 'Erbert's man and Captin Wilberforce's man and Mr. Foster's man and Mr. March's man was all tryin' for to hinduce Mr. Bupp—'e's Mr. Broome's man, you see, sir—for to 'old 'is tongue, sir, and I went so far—beggin' your pardon, sir—I went so far,

I did, as to arsk Mr. Bupp please to step houtside for a momint, and I would tyke pleasure, I would, in punchin' 'is 'ead, sir."

"Servants are human," remarked the major, trying not to betray the joy which the perspiring little Cockney was affording him.

"'Uman, sir?" exclaimed Tooth; "they is hanimals—leastwyes when a hangry femyle sets 'em orf with her tongue, sir—hanimals properly!"

"How like—the upper and the nether worlds!" mused the major, then adding aloud: "You intimate that there was some sort of an altercation between Mr. Broome's man and the maid?"

"Somethink disgryceful, sir—shockin'! You see, sir, it were this wye: Mr. Bupp 'appened to parse a remark about Mrs. Broome goin' with Mr. Courtneay larst night, not meanin' anythink by it, but with that, Mrs. Broome's myde hups and mykes the hinsinuation that Mr. Courtneay 'adn't better be tykin' Mrs. Broome for no more drives hover to Hasville arfter dark. 'Ow vulgar some femyles is, ayn't they, sir? Well, sir, with that, Mr. Bupp 'e and the myde goes at it somethink hawful, and while we was all tryin' to himpress 'em with the hindecency and himpropriety of their hactions, Mrs. Spencer-Creighton's myde—French, sir, and that tart that nothin' won't 'old 'er—screams hout that Mr. Courtneay were a gentleman and her lydy a perfect lydy—which nobody 'adn't 'inted nothink to the contrary—and then that French femyle rushes hout of the servints' 'all and goes hup-stairs and tells her lydy all about it! Now, Major 'Artopp, sir, *w'at* do you think of such hactions?"

While the major was still trying to test the muscles of his face, lest his speech betray him, Courtneay burst into the room and told Tooth to clear out. Exit Tooth.

"You seem to be rather less philosophical than usual, Courtneay," said the major, getting up and facing the younger man. "Tooth has revealed the situation. It appears that you were the principal topic of conversation in the servants' hall this evening—possibly not an altogether de——"

"Servants' hall be damned!" sputtered Courtneay, sitting on the table and viciously biting the end of a cigar. "I sent for you, major, because I know that not another man in the house could think a way out of the beastly hole in which I am at this moment. You can—but you'll have to be deucedly quick about it! Oh, you needn't laugh, for I promise you things are devilish rum!"

"Charmed, of course," replied the major quietly, "but would you mind telling me just exactly what seems to be the matter? According to Tooth, the——"

"Damn Tooth! It's not the gossip of the servants that is troubling me. Good Lord! you don't suppose that I don't know what every servant is—and there are forty of them in this house now—or that anything that they could say would bother me, do you? But unless we do something, and do it at once, she'll carry out her insane idea, and leave in ten minutes! And then where am I at?"

"Who will leave in ten minutes?" asked the major sympathetically.

"Mrs. Spencer-Creighton," groaned Courtneay.

"Elucidate," said the major, coming and sitting by the table. "I was under the impression——"

"Oh, I know, I know!" broke in Courtneay. "Everybody is under the impression, and in a quarter of an hour Broome himself will be under the impression, too. Damn!"

"Really, you know," urged the major, getting up again and confronting Courtneay. "You really must throw a little light on the subject, for I confess that I'm at sea. Come, now, old chap, just precisely what is the situation? Frankly, I don't like it."

"The situation is—I've made a blithering idiot of myself. But if that infernal old woman had minded her own business——"

"Oh, see here, Courtneay, this really won't do, don't you know. If I am to be of the slightest use to you, I must

get the story, all of it, don't you know. Come, now, what's the plot?"

Courtneay told him. During his decidedly melodramatic recital the major leaned back in his chair, his eyes shut, and repressing the temptation to laugh by tugging meditatively at his yellow mustache. But there was a tragic element, a serious side to Courtneay's tale, and the major was not the man to minimize the danger in such affairs. Also there was deep significance in Courtneay's amazing show of feeling; and the major was nothing if not sympathetic. So he subordinated his sense of humor to his sense of honor and his more than passing interest in the youngster, and listened gravely and without interruption until Courtneay had done. Then he opened his eyes, puffed with deliberation for some seconds, and finally stood up to address the meeting.

"Of course," he began, "the first thing to be done is to take Mrs. Craigie into our confidence, even if it was she, as you say, that did the talking. Without her the situation is, I confess, almost as black as you evidently have succeeded in getting yourself to believe. The hour is a bit awkward—quarter-past 3 A. M.—but Mrs. Craigie is large-minded and forgiving, and likewise resourceful. Better send for her, really, old chap."

"Oh, I've already done that," replied Courtneay. "But, good Lord! if the house was afire, the old lady would risk her own and her maid's life rather than fail to complete her toilet—a marvelously complicated affair, too, let me advise you, the old girl's toilet. It may take her an hour—and in ten minutes I'm done for!"

"Are you sure that she understood the urgency of your summons?" asked the major.

"Yes, if she woke up sufficiently to read the English language, for my note was incandescent. Her guilty conscience, moreover, must surely tend to make——"

Courtneay stopped short. A fan was tapping at his door. It was probably Mrs. Craigie—but, then, it might, in view of certain facts known to Courtneay, be somebody else. In the light of what had happened in the last two hours, there was no telling to what lengths a woman might not go. And there were at least two women in the house who might very easily, under all the circumstances, feel themselves scorned, and so be likely to let their fury fulfil the proverb—and precipitate the very devil by coming to his sitting-room at this somewhat unfashionable hour. The fan tapped again, this time with peevish impatience, thereby giving alarming color to the fear that it was not Mrs. Craigie who abhorred emotions of all sorts. Courtneay broke into a mild perspiration, while the major started toward the bedroom door. Scenes of all sorts were avoided by the major.

"Oh, I say, Hartopp—for God's sake!" whispered Courtneay, laying hold upon the major's arm and forcing him into a chair. "Mustn't be left alone, you know."

The fan renewed its imperious demand to be admitted, and Courtneay, hastily arranging his tie before the mirror and shoving Rousseau into the major's hand, and grabbing up a magazine in his own, went over and opened the door. It was Mrs. Craigie—thank Heaven! She entered, a wondrous vision, in a voluminous silk kimono, with some sort of a lace turban in lieu of coiffure, and innumerable sins of omission in respect to the details of facial art covered by a plenary indulgence of indiscriminately scattered powder. There was nothing relaxed or dishabille about her expression, however, for her sharp little black eyes twinkled with knowing, and her air was that of a general in complete command of the situation. Courtneay grasped her hand eagerly, and the major rose and bowed deferentially to the only Blücher who could now save Waterloo. Mrs. Craigie looked from one man to the other, screwing up her little eyes, and then dropped into the arm-chair and burst into a laugh.

"Well, thank goodness, major," she exclaimed, "you are here! And now,

Van, you bad boy, what do you mean, sir, by dragging an old woman out of bed at this hour?"

"You read my note—the second note, I mean?" replied Courtneay.

"I glanced at it."

"Glanced at it?" cried Courtneay, looking madly at his watch. "Why, great heavens! Mrs. Craigie, you don't seem to appreciate the situation. I tell you it's frightful, fatal, impossible—unless we do something at once!"

"Dear me! And what seems to be the matter?" asked Mrs. Craigie, fanning little clouds of powder off her nose.

"Why, all that nonsense of yours after dinner to-night was promptly reported in the servants' hall. One thing led to another, and now Mrs. Spencer-Creighton's maid has babbled, and Mrs. Spencer-Creighton is going to leave the house in ten minutes, unless——"

"Not she!" broke in Mrs. Craigie, speaking as one having authority. "She is in bed, with a hot-water bottle at her feet, a cold towel on her head, and enough valerian to quiet all the nerves any sensible woman has any right to have."

"You're a wonder! How did you work it?" asked Courtneay, while the major breathed more easily.

"How did I accomplish it, you ask? Silly! How could I accomplish it? I sent her your note—the second note, I mean," replied Mrs. Craigie innocently.

"What?" gasped Courtneay, and the major breathed less easily—until he remembered that Mrs. Craigie was a very wise old woman, and the best partner he had ever had at bridge.

"Why, certainly. Why not? It stated the case—rather better than I could have done—and it took the odd trick," chuckled Mrs. Craigie.

"Might I ask what you said in the note?" asked the major, after they were done laughing.

"Oh, Van simply told me that he was only flirting with Mrs. Broome; that he loved Mrs. Spencer-Creighton to distraction; and that he would go mad and never, never forgive me if I let Mrs. Spencer-Creighton leave the house without allowing him to explain matters—that's all, major," answered Mrs. Craigie, adding with angelic innocence: "Of course I sent it to her."

"Did she send you any reply?" asked the major, expanding with a delicious sense of seriousness and judicial gravity.

"At all events, she didn't leave the house, did she?" replied Mrs. Craigie triumphantly. "As for the consequences, it is for Van to act. I'm dummy now, and Van can see my cards—with Mrs. Broome chicane, and Eleanor doubling hearts, Van ought to go in for little slam at least, don't you think, major?"

"And the honors all in his hand—which counts eighty, Courtneay," laughed the major.

"Unless those servants have succeeded in their missionary efforts with Mrs. Broome also," growled Courtneay, to whom frivolity was always distasteful and just now unfeeling.

"Oh, they saw to that, I promise you," remarked Mrs. Craigie cheeringly.

"Oh, Lord!" groaned Courtneay, looking up with startled inquiry in his eyes.

"Not really?" muttered the major nervously, knowing a thing or two about Mrs. Broome which possibly Courtneay did not know. "Those servants should be discharged—or choked; they should be, really!"

"Yes, and the worst of it is that Mrs. Broome is not quite like Mrs. Spencer-Creighton," went on Mrs. Craigie unmercifully.

"But, by all that's holy, I swear that Broome knew that I was only—only borrowing Mrs. Broome, you know—just to draw Mrs. Spencer-Creighton from cover, don't you know," protested Courtneay, as he sank utterly desperate in the depths of his Morris-chair.

"Might I suggest that you do something, Mrs. Craigie?" quietly put in the major, after a rather awkward silence.

"Do something?" cried the old lady, sitting up and glaring at the major. "You don't suppose that I have failed to do something already, do you?"

"Oh, have you?" shouted Courtneay, clutching at some vague hope. "What? What?"

"Why, of course I sent her——"

"Not my first note?" cried Courtneay, getting to his feet and confronting Mrs. Craigie.

"The very thing—foolish boy! Why not?" replied Mrs. Craigie, winking at the major, who, however, did not appreciate her pleasantry.

Courtneay collapsed.

"And his first note was?" asked the major, not as calmly as he liked to ask questions.

"His first note was really charming;" replied the tormenting old woman, blissfully ignoring the havoc her words were creating in two usually philosophical breasts. "It would have been a downright shame not to let poor Grace see that note; it would, honestly!"

There was a gentle, almost apologetic, tap at the door. Courtneay looked gropingly at the major, who in turn looked appealingly at Mrs. Craigie, who looked at the clock and then at the two blushing and anxious men.

"Some one is knocking at the door, Van," she said, when a second and less timid rap compelled attention. "It's half-after three, and I look a perfect old fright. If it's one of those stiff Englishmen, prevaricate, shoot him, do anything except let him see me!"

Her distress somewhat relieved Courtneay's, and he went to the door. A little hand stuck a note through the crack which he made for purposes of reconnoitering. Courtneay took the note and slammed the door with immense relief. Mrs. Craigie and the major exchanged curiously different looks while Courtneay read the note. He read it two or three times, as if failing to realize the doom which it had caused to descend upon him, and then handed it to the major without comment. The major read it, read it again, and then passed it on to Mrs. Craigie, who read it only once.

"And now what?" murmured Courtneay, from the abyss.

"Read it aloud," suggested the major. "It may sound clearer, you know."

Mrs. Craigie read as follows:

If you are ignorant of what is being said by every one in the house, even the servants, you are the only one who is. If Freddy hears of this, it means the end! I wouldn't care, were it not that Nanette tells me that the very servants all think that you were only using me to make *her* jealous. Assure me that this is false and I shall face anything without the slightest fear. But oh, do, *do* send me just a line to-night to prove that you meant it all, for I shall lose my mind if you fail me. Yours in haste,

G. V. N. B.

"May I lead, major?" asked Mrs. Craigie, looking at the note as though it were a hand.

"Pray do, madam," replied the old bridge player solemnly.

"Hold on a moment!" exclaimed Courtneay, now far too deep in despair to bear with patience the old lady's banter. "Just what do you propose to do about it, Mrs. Craigie?"

"You boys fatigue me, really you do," sighed the old campaigner. "First you laughed at me when I warned you that Grace would take you seriously, and now you doubt my ability to pull your chestnuts out of the fire. What is there to do? It's perfectly plain! I shall simply tell Grace that Freddy *has* heard about it, and then leave it to her to decide whether or not she will take your view of it—that it was all a prearranged bit of flirtation, with a definite object—or insist upon making you assure her that it was a genuine piece of naughty seriousness. I guess that she will decide to take your view of it; don't you, major?"

"Words fail me," replied the major, jumping up and kissing the old lady's hand and then slapping Courtneay's back.

"Then, for Heaven's sake, do it at once," said Courtneay, "for Broome may hear an ugly version of it and interview her before you have put the flea in her ear."

As Mrs. Craigie went out of the room, Broome entered—with a look which the major did not at all fancy. Courtneay, relying with wild confidence on the omnipotence of his emissary, received his unexpected guest with con-

siderable ease and great cordiality. But Broome had manifestly come for a purpose, and he wasted no time over diplomatic preliminaries.

"Well, Courtneay," he began, speaking with rather more than his customary suavity, much to the major's relief, "I made you a little loan the other day, you remember."

"I'll be off to bed, Courtneay. Don't forget that we ride over to The Cedars and back before breakfast," said the major, rising.

"Hold on, Hartopp," interposed Broome. "I'd a bit rather that you remained, if you don't mind."

The major understood. He had known Broome all his life, and he perfectly realized the fact that the present rather ticklish situation would not betray that eminently philosophical and self-contained gentleman into anything so vulgar as feeling. Also, the major fully understood the delightful *entente* existing between Mr. Freddy Broome and Mrs. Freddy Broome. If Freddy had come to discuss his own and Courtneay's relations with Mrs. Freddy, he would do so, the major was aware, solely with a view to avoiding any possible outbreak of vulgarity, *i. e.*, feeling. There would be no unseemly display of jealousy, no unchivalrous insinuations, no theatrical demand for explanations. Accordingly, the major sat down again.

"I've come to call the loan," went on Broome, rolling a cigarette.

"Not dissatisfied with the security, are you?" asked Courtneay.

"Hang it, man, no!" retorted Broome, "but the impression seems to have become rather pronounced that possibly you had forgotten that it was merely a temporary accommodation."

"By gad, Broome, you don't want me to assure you that I——"

"I want nothing," said Broome, cutting short Courtneay's excessively irritating show of feeling, "except to spare Mrs. Broome the inconvenience of becoming seriously interested in you. It might tend to create the impression that——"

"But, good God, Broome——" Courtneay was protesting, when the door was opened without permission, and Mrs. Craigie marched in, triumphantly leading Mrs. Broome. The latter was still in her dinner-gown, but redness about the eyes and certain other less palpable signs indicated that she had passed a strenuous night. Now, however, she was smiling and radiantly lovely.

"Freddy dear," she sang out, when the three men stood up, looking rather uneasy, "Mrs. Craigie told me that you were in Mr. Courtneay's apartment, and I just couldn't think of going to bed without coming and telling you all the best joke. It worked, Freddy—beautifully—our little strategy, I mean. Yes, poor Mrs. Spencer-Creighton showed her hand by becoming awfully jealous—downright cruel of us to fool her so, wasn't it?—and everybody in the house was taken in, too, for they think that they see through Mr. Courtneay's simply outrageous devotion to me, and were getting ready for the spiciest scandal you ever heard of. What *do* you think of that?"

The major bowed profoundly in the direction of Mrs. Craigie, while Broome and Courtneay burst into a laugh. Whatever the secret thoughts of each may have been, nothing could have been more genuine than their rejoicing over the event. Mrs. Craigie especially enjoyed the anticipation of letting some people know in the morning what she thought of them, with their obtuseness and scandalous love of scandal.

"And now, I suppose, Broome, we may consider the incident closed?" asked Courtneay.

"Hermetically!" replied Broome, with the relief he always showed when he could throw anything into the waste-basket of forgetfulness. And the meeting adjourned.

A round dozen of servants were sent about their business on the following day—not very logically, perhaps—and that evening, after dinner, Mrs. Broome announced the engagement of Mrs. Spencer-Creighton to Mr. "Van" Courtneay.

THE PRECIPITANCY OF VAN VLECK



BY HENRY C. ROWLAND





THE first person to board the ship after she had been docked was Mr. Doremus Van Vleck; but, then, Mr. Van Vleck was a privileged person with the officials of the line. Once aboard, he brought to bay a first-cabin steward and purchased a dollar's worth of obligingness.

"Stand here beside me," requested Mr. Van Vleck, "and as the passengers leave the ship point out Miss Laroque. Then wait a bit, as it is possible that I may need your services."

"I'm not sure as I know the lady, sir," replied the steward; "leastwise, I ain't sure as how the lady I have in mind might not be her."

"In that case," replied Mr. Van Vleck, "you had better call in the services of an expert diagnostician. Here is the fee; now go and identify Miss Laroque before she leaves the ship, and then return and point her out for me."

"Very good, sir. Thank you, sir. I'll get the stewardess to 'elp me, sir." And, laying his nose to the ground, the steward harked away.

As is so frequently the case after paying for a service, it was presented gratis. The passengers had already begun to leave the ship, and as Mr. Van Vleck stood upon the upper deck passing mental comments hardly flattering to the struggling vanguard of those who must always be first, his critical eye was drawn to a girl who appeared to have stepped too near the mouth of the flume and been drawn into the current. Just in front of her there was a portly Chicago drummer; undoubtedly a large and elaborate drummer, representing a thriving manufacturing plant which sold millions and millions of patent toothpicks soaked in oil of cloves or cinnamon, a sample of which the representative chewed as he walked down the plank. He would push petulantly ahead until he trod on the heels of those in front of him, when he would say: "Pahdon me," without shifting the angle of the toothpick; then he would step back and place his two-hundred pounds of low-grade tissue on the foot of the girl, and as he felt her shrink the fat voice would say: "Pahdon me," while the tone said: "It is really such a bore to be so polite, but, then, it is a case of *noblesse oblige!*"

"Fat swine!" thought Mr. Van Vleck angrily, and figured his chances of being able to get down in time to be of service as a rampart for the girl, but there were too many people behind to make this possible. Then he examined the girl more closely, and his righteous rage gathered way as he noticed that she was very charming and undoubtedly well-bred. There was nothing telepathic in his scrutiny, as it never occurred to him that this young person might be the quarry on the trail of whom he had despatched the steward, for he had already formed his idea of that young lady, and he was not in the habit of shifting his ideas to adjust them to mere facts.

As Mr. Van Vleck watched the procession in gradually rising anger, he became conscious of a new factor within his cycle of interest. Behind the lady came an Austrian Jew, whose outward and visible jewelry could scarcely fail to be seen even through the thickness of a five-pound note laid across the eyes of the inspector. He was a tall, powerful, weather-beaten, able-bodied sort of Jew, who looked as if he might

have taken his life in his hands more than once in buying from illicit traders of precious stones in those parts of the world where such are to be found. He was no cringer, this Jew, and presently, when the toothpick man stopped suddenly to light a cigar, delaying traffic while the wind blew his matches out, the Jew edged his way carefully past the lady and then went on down the plank, without any especial reference to the convenience of the drummer, who in the shock of contact dropped his cigar and stepped upon it.

"Good!" exclaimed the delighted Mr. Van Vleck, in so loud a tone that the girl heard him and looked up in surprise. Her big gray eyes met his, and both smiled involuntarily, each knowing that the other had observed the incident.

"Gad!—what a beauty!" said Mr. Van Vleck to himself. The charge of the sinewy Jew, who was now favoring the irate drummer with a Mephistophelian grin, had opened the course to traffic; the girl dropped her eyes with a tinge of color on her cheek, and as she passed on down, the appreciative eyes of Mr. Van Vleck followed her admiringly. Then he started and almost dropped his stick, for right in her wake there came an elderly maid bearing a light dressing-bag, on the end of which was stamped in small black letters, "C. L."

"C. L.—Camille Laroque!" exclaimed Mr. Van Vleck beneath his breath, while his heart gave a most ill-ordered thump. "How extraordinary! It can't be! Why, *she* is a slip of a girl just out of a convent-school——"

"There goes the lady, sir! That's her—with the helderly party. There, sir! 'Arf-way down the plank!"

"Not so *loud!*" exclaimed Mr. Van Vleck angrily; but the voice of the steward had carrying power, and had already reached the ears of the girl, who turned and looked up in surprise. Again her eyes met those of Mr. Van Vleck; they clung for an instant inquiringly, and then a wave of color swept the long look away, while the young man once more felt as if an alarm-clock had been sprung within him.

"I employed you to point the lady out to *me,* not to everybody within hail," he said severely. "A man with a voice like yours should wear an automobile exhaust-muffler. Now come with me, and we will see what is to be done."

Followed by the steward, he made his way to the wharf, where he found the girl looking about her expectantly. Mr. Van Vleck approached and removed his hat.

"Miss Laroque?" he inquired. The girl bowed assent, and appeared slightly embarrassed. The evidence of this emotion placed the young man more at ease.

"I am Doremus Van Vleck," he began; then, as he noticed her startled expression and swift change of color, continued: "Your guardian, Judge Ravenelle, was delayed by the freshets on his way North, and will not arrive in New York until this evening. He wired me from Washington, asking me to have my cousin, the Reverend Mr. Stiles, meet you in his place, but I have taken the liberty of appropriating the privilege myself. You see, I am rather well-known here at the dock, and can probably get you clear more quickly than could Mr. Stiles."

"You are most kind," she replied, in a tremulous voice. Her eyes flashed up to his and dropped again. "I trust that you have not been inconvenienced."

Mr. Van Vleck thought that he had never before heard his language spoken with such a delicious hint of a foreign accent.

"It is a pleasure," he assured her; "and now, if you will excuse me for a moment, I will look after your luggage, and then we will go to the house of my aunt, where you are to stop, you know."

Looking after the luggage is not difficult when one's family has for years retained the services of a customs-inspector. The usual rites being duly observed, Mr. Van Vleck led the way to the two electric hansoms which were awaiting him. Carefully placing the matronly French "maid" in one of

these, and having assured her in her own tongue that she was in no danger of being crushed by the fall of a tall building in that part of the city to which they were going, he assisted Miss Laroque into the other, and calmly placed himself at her side.

For a moment neither spoke; the girl, awaiting in fluttering expectancy the next high-handed maneuver of this authoritative young man, who had so scandalized her convent code of ethics, and Mr. Van Vleck being silent through the attempt to formulate certain remarks of a delicate character, for the setting forth of which he had that morning witnessed the sunrise for the first time since the hunting season.

"I hope, Miss Laroque," he observed, "that, considering the peculiarly personal relative positions which we occupy, you will not consider me indelicate in the informal way in which I have come to meet you."

She threw him a swift, inquiring glance, puzzled, and a bit frightened at the cold formality of his tone, so different from the unaffected cordiality of his first greeting.

"Indeed," she replied, the slightest quiver in her sweet voice, "it is most considerate of you. It is far less trying to make your acquaintance here than in a drawing-room surrounded by curious people, who—who——"

"Who were waiting to see how we impressed each other," he supplied.

"Yes," she answered eagerly; "dowdy old relatives, who would peer and smirk and smile at every word which we might say. Oh, I have been *dreading* that part of it!"

"I am very glad," replied Mr. Van Vleck, "that you are more at your ease alone with me than you would be in the presence of others——"

"I liked you," she interrupted, with girlish naiveté, "when I looked up and saw how pleased you were when that great swarthy Austrian pushed that *vilain* trades-person out of my way."

"Wasn't he a beast—that animal in front of you!" exclaimed Mr. Van Vleck, drawn from his prearranged formality by a sympathetic impulse. "I am glad that you are so ready to like me," he continued, "because I was afraid that the fact of my having been chosen as your husband might have prejudiced you against me."

"But why?" she answered, in surprise. "I should think that would be all the greater reason for my thinking well of you."

"Then you do not resent having a husband selected for you, without any consultation of your own wishes?" he asked in surprise.

"Indeed, why should I? Surely my guardian would not have selected an improper person for me to marry."

"But how do you know—or how did your guardian know—that you might not be in love with some other man when the time came for you to marry?"

"Pardon, *mon ami*, but we were not speaking of love; we were speaking of marriage." The fair head, with its fine-spun tendrils of gossamer hair, was turned from him, and as Mr. Van Vleck regarded her curiously, he could see a flush creeping under the little ear.

"But do you not consider love as indispensable to marriage?" he exclaimed, and then regretted the words, for he could see that she was blushing furiously, and apparently too embarrassed to reply. He tried to cancel his question.

"Pardon me—I should not have asked you that. I forget that such questions are not discussed in institutions such as you have quitted. You see, Miss Laroque, in this country the ladies decide such matters for themselves."

"How very indelicate!" she murmured beneath her breath.

"It is all in the point of view," replied Mr. Van Vleck. "I think that I begin to comprehend your position. You have regarded your marriage to me as something preordained, and as inevitable as the change of the seasons. It has never occurred to you to question the choice made for you."

"But why, then, should I?" she asked, surprise banishing her embarrassment. "Surely it would be foolish for a young girl to question the judgment of those

who are older and wiser, and to whom she owes everything!"

"But I might have been disagreeable or dissipated——"

"Then, you would not have been chosen for me by my guardian."

"Or deformed and ugly——"

"That would have been the same; then, I knew that you were—were—not that——" The pretty lips had narrowly escaped a pleasing word, and the flushed face was turned away, until all that Mr. Van Vleck could see was the contour of a cheek, the curve of a long eyelash, and the extreme tip of a retroussé nose.

"But you had never seen me," he began, with a poorly disguised complacency.

"No doubt that was the reason," she replied quickly, "my guardian sent me a picture of you, taken when you were in college—but, then, one can tell so little from a photograph." Her positive little chin was tilted slightly upward.

"I had taken it for granted," said Mr. Van Vleck, ignoring her closing comment, "that you would resent having your husband chosen for you without reference to your own—own—inclinations, and that you might have formed a preconceived dislike——"

"Just as you have done!" The words came as quickly as the flash of the long gray eyes, which for an instant met his, leaving him startled and confused.

"Why do you think that?" he asked, with a clumsy effort to gain time.

"You must find me very stupid, *mon ami!* I do not think it; I am certain of it! In fact, you have been telling me so since you placed me in this automobile!"

"But is it not natural that a man should wish to make his own choice?" he asked, blundering into frankness when he found himself stripped of indirect method.

"That is for you to decide; I know very little of men. But since that is the case, it seems to me that your course is very simple. There is no law which can compel you to marry against your desire. Why did you not go directly to my guardian when he was here, and tell him that you did not wish to marry me?"

Mr. Van Vleck had never before realized the immense amount of space that could exist between two people in the same electric hansom.

"I am afraid that I have given you a wrong impression," he began. "It was not that I objected to marrying you——"

"Monsieur is so kind," she murmured.

"But rather that I feared you might not wish to marry me——"

"And so modest."

"Or that you might have formed some other attachment——"

"There is such abundant opportunity in a convent."

"That it was rather on your account——"

"Can you ever forgive my ingratitude?" Her oval face was turned to him, and as the dusky-gray eyes looked deep into his, and the expressive lips were pursed together in a smile of subtle irony, Mr. Van Vleck was quickly conscious of a strange and sudden impulse—a new impulse—which did not conform to any of his well-ordered theories, and filled him with a strange bewilderment. He found himself confused and unable to proceed.

"Myself, I have been most absurdly lacking in such reflections!" she exclaimed, throwing out both pretty hands in a deprecating gesture. "I have been childishly content to leave the decision of these things to those whose knowledge of the world placed them in a position to decide. But I can feel for monsieur"—her sweet voice softened—"and all that he must have suffered!"

"Oh, I say!" cried Mr. Van Vleck, with an involuntary squirm of humiliation. "Please don't make me seem such an utter idiot! I've boggled the whole thing. I thought that you'd probably come over here hating the very thought of me——"

"But why should I?" There was a childish innocence in the question, which the curve of the red lips belied. "I had

always thought of you as high-spirited and handsome and clever——"

"Oh, don't, please!" groaned the miserable Mr. Van Vleck. "What a horrible come-down——"

"Now you are dashing off in another direction, before you are sent." She carefully gathered up the reins of power in both strong and delicate little hands. "Why do you persist in rushing off—in the wrong direction—to meet the issue so long before it arrives? Why do you not wait until the situation has presented itself?" Her tone was sympathetically curious.

"I—I'm sure I don't know," replied the miserable Mr. Van Vleck. "You see, I studied the whole thing out from *your* point of view, as I thought."

"Are you in love with any one!" she asked abruptly.

"Am I——? Eh—no!" he managed to answer, and then a sudden thought struck into him with the chill of a stiletto. "I—I—was afraid that perhaps *you* might be. Are you?" he asked.

She laughed in a light, rippling way, that impressed Mr. Van Vleck as wonderfully musical and quite different from the laugh of any woman which he had ever heard before.

"I? No, indeed! You are the first man with whom I have ever been tête-à-tête. Do you know, I was quite alarmed until I saw——"

"What a duffer I am!" said Mr. Van Vleck sadly.

"No—what a boy you are! Tell me" —she leaned slightly toward him, with a charming air of confidential interest —"have you ever been in love?"

Mr. Van Vleck felt his face becoming very hot. "Oh, come!" he answered protestingly. "That's not fair, you know. But I've never been really out-and-out in love!" he added honestly.

She was silent a moment, and Mr. Van Vleck was warmly conscious that her wise, inexperienced eyes were studying him carefully, and looking far beneath the surface. He wished that something would happen—something which did not concern this demure beauty at his side, and which would enable him to show her that he was not such a fool as he appeared to have done his utmost to make her believe.

"If you are not in love with any one," she remarked finally, "I do not understand why you should be so antagonistic to the marriage which was arranged years ago by your uncle and my father."

"But I am not!" protested Mr. Van Vleck, with absolute honesty. "I was simply opposed to the idea of marrying a girl who had no particular interest in me, and might very possibly be fond of some other man."

"But you were not expected to marry her until you had been given ample opportunity to become acquainted; then, if you had not found her congenial, you need not have married her at all. It would have made a great difference in your worldly fortune, of course——"

"And in hers."

Her eyes met his in a startled way, then dropped to the pavements in front of them. She was silent for a moment.

"I have done you a great injustice," she said slowly. "I did not think of that. *In hers,* of course! I think that I begin to understand." She turned to him frankly, and there was the faintest quiver to her voice. "You yourself are opposed to our marriage—opposed to marrying at all, we will presume—but, reflecting that, while you were willing to accept the loss of fortune, it would mean an equal loss to me, your only hope was that I might be equally opposed to the marriage, either through some other attachment or through natural dislike to a *mariage de convenance.* Finding that I have accepted the situation, you are ready to sacrifice yourself." The fair head drooped.

Again that new and potent impulse shook Mr. Van Vleck to the depths of the frank nature underlying his acquired form. An insidious voice whispered in his ear to avail himself of this gratuitous tribute to his traits, but something deeper rejected the unearned gift with scorn.

"I hate to keep on disillusioning you," he answered stubbornly, "but I am afraid that there was nothing so de-

cent in my attitude. I fancy it was more a sort of boy's vanity than anything else. I simply objected to being married out of hand, without any say in the matter; and I thought that of course you would feel the same way, so I came down to meet you, with the idea that we might join forces and try and get the whole thing called off. For your sake, I was in hope that we might manage to do so without the tremendous loss——"

"But how about yourself?" she demanded. "Are you willing to accept such a loss?"

"Personally, I had not thought much about the money part of it. You see, I am fairly well provided for——"

"But so am I," she interrupted. "I am sure I do not know what I should do with such a vast amount of money." She pondered for a moment, while some strange premonition of ill crept over the restless soul of Mr. Van Vleck.

"Since we feel as we do on the subject," she began slowly, "I fail to see the use of letting the affair proceed further. I—will—see my guardian tonight, and tell him that we have decided that we do not wish to marry this autumn—at all, I should say—and I will carry out the plan which I had conceived of visiting a friend in Surrey. Perhaps I may remain here a fortnight, just to see this marvelous city, and during that time I should be most pleased to see you if you care to call." She turned to him with a cordial smile. "I can never thank you enough for your frankness and delicacy," she added. "It has averted a most unhappy condition, has it not?"

For some inexplicable reason, her words brought no cheer to the troubled spirit of Mr. Van Vleck. He glanced covertly at the graceful figure at his side, then at the winsome beauty of the charming face, and felt that from his point of view the result of the dialogue was far from gratifying. He wondered dumbly at the odd internal tumult which the presence of this fair stranger had produced, and found himself very loath to have it cease. His eyes fell upon a familiar object, and he saw to his dismay that they had turned into the street of their destination.

"I say, Miss Laroque," he exclaimed involuntarily, "we are almost at the house——"

"Then we have arrived at our conclusion just in time," she replied, smiling brightly.

"But—but I don't feel as if I'd given you the right—that you quite understand. I say," he continued, with a swift inspiration, "it's very early, and perhaps Aunt Bernice may not be up. What do you say to a spin through the park?"

The girl's eyes sparkled. "It *would* be a lark! But would it be—proper? You know we are no longer fiancé——"

"Then, let's not break it off until we get back. You can't tell—perhaps when we have looked into the matter more carefully, we may decide that—it—er—would be just as well to let things——"

"But that is quite impossible," she began, with decision, when Mr. Van Vleck threw up the trap overhead.

"Go through the park—all around," he ordered, adding: "We have an hour yet."

"But Laure, my maid!" exclaimed Miss Laroque.

"Her hansom is to follow us," replied Mr. Van Vleck. "The airing will do her good after being shut up aboard that ship for a week."

There was a moment's silence.

"It is wonderful, this city!" exclaimed the girl, glancing with excited awe at the strange sights about her.

"It is, indeed," replied Mr. Van Vleck. "And it is so entirely different from anything in Europe that it makes its influence felt upon the people who live here. It is quite impossible for a person of continental education to comprehend our point of view."

"So I should imagine," replied Miss Laroque demurely.

"It is, in fact," pursued Mr. Van Vleck, "hardly safe for an American, and—we will say—a person of French associations, to attempt to settle any subject under discussion until each has been brought to see the position of the other."

"Unless one is willing to admit the conclusion of the other."

"Even in that case it is wiser to leave the point in question open, because there is a possibility that the person deferred to might not be quite sure of his own ground."

"But that would only occur," said Miss Laroque, "in the case of a very young and inexperienced person."

"Not necessarily," replied Mr. Van Vleck warmly. "It might be the result of a very sensible argument advanced by the other person."

"But of course," observed Miss Laroque, "the American point of view is advanced and progressive, and much more adapted to this country."

"Not in all cases," replied Mr. Van Vleck. "It is no doubt more practical in finance and politics, and all that sort of thing, but not as regards the conduct of the individual. In that respect we have much to learn."

"If all Americans were as liberal as yourself," murmured Miss Laroque, "what a Utopia this country would soon become!"

"I am always ready to learn," admitted Mr. Van Vleck.

Miss Laroque's long gray eyes stole a quick glance, then fell with demure modesty upon the tips of her little boots.

"In fact," pursued Mr. Van Vleck, "my conversation this morning with you has taught me a great deal."

"You are most polite."

"It's awfully good of you to say so, but it seems to me that I've been a downright cad!" declared Mr. Van Vleck.

"Indeed, you have been exceedingly kind and considerate. If you had not shown me the situation from your point of view, just think how terrible it might have been—we would undoubtedly have been married this autumn." She was studying the passing vehicles as she spoke, and Mr. Van Vleck admired the graceful poise of her head as one might admire a priceless jewel in a show-case, or the gold pieces seen through the little window of the paying-teller.

"You did not think that so terrible a little while ago," sadly observed Mr. Van Vleck. "I am sorry that you should feel so after becoming better acquainted."

"But it is not that. A husband in the abstract is quite different from one in person; also, the element of personal choice did not enter the question to embarrass me before, because all that had been done for me. I see it differently now. You are right; I shall not marry any man whom I do not—love."

A pang of bitterest jealousy tore away the last shreds of the personal pride remaining to the thoroughly miserable Mr. Van Vleck.

"Do you know," he began painfully, "that since my talk with you I am convinced that your previous attitude was the correct one. My views were childish and silly. Don't you think that you could forget having heard them at all?"

Something in the eagerness of his voice brought her breath a trifle faster.

"I am afraid that would be impossible," she answered slowly; "because I have already accepted your views as the proper ones to hold. I had never thought of the matter as you presented it."

"But I assure you——" he began.

"You have already assured me. Nothing which you could say now could prevent me from appreciating the horror of marrying a man who did not—care for me."

"No man living could help caring for you!" burst impetuously from the utterly demoralized Mr. Van Vleck.

"And for whom I did not care." These last words seemed whispered to the side cushions of the cab.

"But don't you think—suppose that you had married me as was first planned—if I hadn't come down here this morning and made a mess of the whole thing—do you think that, under those circumstances, you could have—have——"

"Have loved you? It would have been your fault if I had not. You see, *mon ami*, I was already prepared to love you. I had been told so much that was good of you——"

"And to think that I should have

gone and spoiled it all!" exclaimed the now thoroughly wretched Mr. Van Vleck. They were nearing the gates on their homeward way, and the slight time left to them filled him with desperation.

"Considering the ridiculous failure which I have made of my argument, I do not wonder that you hold me in contempt," he began.

"But that is simply your own absurd idea. You have made no failure of your argument, and I do not hold you in contempt. In fact, your argument has been so successful that I am quite converted; and for the tactful way in which you have accomplished this I hold you in very high esteem."

"But I would much prefer that you were not converted!" exclaimed Mr. Van Vleck hopelessly. His eyes resting with moody apathy upon the street in front, he failed to catch the quick gleam which flashed from the long gray eyes of the girl.

"But why?" she asked innocently, although her more rapid breathing might have betrayed to a closer observer than the melancholy Mr. Van Vleck a certain underlying guile. "I fail to see any reason why your views should have undergone a change." The long lashes swept up, permitting her a near scrutiny of the strong, aristocratic features of the young man at her side; then, at the sight of something which seemed gathering about the fine mouth and eyes, she caught her breath quickly and drew away in fluttered apprehension.

"That," said Mr. Van Vleck, with an air of stubborn resolution, "is because you are unable to see yourself as you appear to me. I went down to the steamer expecting to meet an awkward, callow, convent-school girl; horribly shy, frightened, and dreading to see me, and instead I met—*you!* I felt very sorry for this girl, whom I expected to find, and wanted to try to reassure ner and put her at her ease. It seemed to me to be a horribly trying thing for a girl to be sent over here to marry a man whom she had never seen, and I felt really sorry for her."

"And now?"

"Now I feel sorry for myself."

"It *was* kind and thoughtful of you," she murmured.

"Of course there was a personal element in it; but it was not on that account that I went down there. That could have been easily adjusted afterward. Then, when I met you, and saw how—how different you were from the girl whom I had expected to meet, it—it rather—well, I was afraid that you would think that I was presuming on my subsequent proprietorship; and, you see, I felt obliged to show you that that was not my motive, and so I blundered around and said a lot of nonsense, which—which——"

"Which was all perfectly true!"

"Very possibly. I'm an awkward animal when taken by surprise."

"You are one whom a woman would trust——"

"Like a faithful dog!"

"When you are content to be yourself——"

"Which I'm afraid is not very often! But you must let me finish," he continued doggedly. "After we started, and you talked to me, everything was changed. I have never met a woman like you, who seemed to make me natural, in spite of myself, and made me ashamed of all affectation. You seemed to look right through me—and be laughing at me, but not in a disagreeable way; as if you knew and understood, and I knew that you knew that I under—— Oh, pshaw! now I'm getting all tangled up again! But you see what I mean—you understand, do you not?"

The honest appeal in his voice struck a delicate overtone in the sensitive nature of the girl.

"I—I—think that I do."

"Then perhaps you can understand how it is that, although I—we—have never seen you—I have only known you for about an hour—I can't help loving you. Do you mind my telling you?"

The flushed face of Miss Laroque was pressed against the smooth cushions at the side of the cab. Mr. Van Vleck gazed in keenest apprehension at the averted girlish figure.

"Please forgive me! I did not mean to—to bother you." With an instinctive, if somewhat contradictory, effort at atonement, his strong hand closed over the little one at his side. There was a moment's pause.

"Are you angry?" he asked abruptly.

"Non, mon ami." The answer was barely audible.

"Frightened?"

"Non, mon ami."

"Unhappy?"

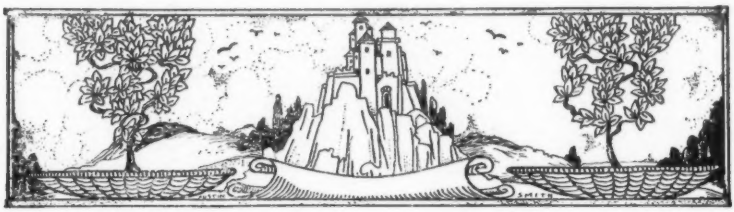
"Non—mon ami."

"Happy?"

There was no reply whatever. The fresh face was still buried in the cushions. There was a comparatively long silence, which was broken by the tentative voice of Mr. Van Vleck.

"Don't you think that a spring wedding is nicer than one in the autumn—dear?"

There was a long silence, followed by a whispered *"Oui—mon cher."*



VALENTINE

HAD I but Israfeli's fire,
And one string from his golden lyre,
About me words should sing like birds
To voice the depths of my desire.

Knew I but Love's fair alphabet,
The letters I would twine and set
Till there for thee should woven be
My passion in a carcanet.

And for return could I but gain
One blush-reply thy cheek to stain,
Hear thee confess one dimpled "Yes,"
Then, sweet, my labor were not vain!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

ELLEN BERWICK



BY ANNE O'HAGAN

"DO you know what you've saved me from, Ellen?" Robert asked me as we sailed, in deeply satisfied plebeianism, down to Coney Island one afternoon early in the summer. We were in a sheltered angle of the upper deck. Beyond us there was the laughter of a crowd of girls and boys, blending with the tinkle of the band. Near by two stout, comfortable dames jogged their babies on their knees and exchanged housekeeping experiences. Opposite us a tired-looking man slept beneath the brim of his soft hat. The harbor was in holiday attire of blue and sunshine, and Staten Island rose ahead, beautiful and fair, in tender, young greens. I was deeply content with the day and its prospects and my companion. I was too idle to reply to his remark except by a negative shake of the head.

Robert persisted in being earnest in spite of the example of languor which I set him.

"You've saved me from being the most contemptible object on earth," he declared in a low tone; "a young man devoted to the cause of social advancement in New York."

I sat up, galvanized into speech.

"You weren't that—you couldn't have been that!" I cried.

"I was," he insisted. "I came here, as you know, with a very limited acquaintance. I had my own way to make. I've done well, professionally—indeed, Ellen, I think I may tell you that I'm a crackajack of an architect! Well, I met some good fellows, I was introduced about, joined a good club, and the first thing I knew I was telling myself that it was advantageous—even necessary—for me to have a desirable list of social acquaintances. Of course I knew in my heart that it wouldn't make twenty cents' worth of difference in twenty years whether I knew people in society or not, provided I knew my business, but I pretended to myself that a certain amount of sycophantism was essential to success. I deliberately cultivated ignorant old women and shallow young ones——"

"You didn't! I won't hear you say such things!" I fairly shuddered. I remembered Mrs. Poindexter and the "minors" at the Signora's. Did the same temptation, in varying guises of subtlety, await all young men in New York? Was the real pitfall to which it lured them this carefully covered one, this one so inviting that they might not even recognize it?

"I did, too," Robert went on, unmoved by my shudder. "I had quite made up my mind that it would be as easy to fall in love with a girl well-placed financially and socially as with another, and that it would be much more agreeable when done. So I went rather exclusively among those likely to have such young women on their visiting-lists. Of course I justified myself by saying that the people all liked me, that my talents were superior to their money and the accident of their position, and especially that I needed them in my business. It's all easy enough for a bachelor with the full complement of features and a fair knowledge of the use of the park. I kept away from you for awhile after Christmas because it had been borne in upon me that you were going to interfere with my scheme."

I do not know whether I was more hurt or flattered. Certainly it was not soothing to one's pride to hear that one has been avoided as a socially ineligible young person; but there was balm in the thought that one's attractions were more

potent than one's disabilities. Then, too, I was a little hurt in my belief in Robert. He had seemed to me so much finer than he now made himself out to be.

"Do you utterly despise me?" he asked at last.

I looked at him and forced my lips to smile.

"I told you," he went on, with something of an effort, "because I wanted you to know the worst and most contemptible side of me. You compel honesty, Ellen. I——"

"You never could have done it," I interrupted him. "You might have drifted into the situation, and by and by you might have found it natural to go on. But you couldn't ever have deliberately cultivated people for what you could get out of them. You're too kind, too sincere, too manly. See how good you were to me when I first came!"

"It was easy then. You didn't threaten my plan. Besides, no one could help wanting to be kind to you, Ellen. There's something so gallant about your way of going ahead, and something so appealing, too. No one could help wanting to be good to you. And—haven't we had good times together since you brought me back to my senses, and we have taken things as they came?"

Good times! We had, indeed. Since the afternoon when he had taken charge of me in the alien camp of Mrs. Hennen I had forgotten what it was to be lonely. I had conquered all my distaste for balcony seats in the theater and opera-house. I had overcome my objections to queer, out-of-the-way restaurants. I had taken long walks in odd corners of the city—along the waterfront, in the tangled streets of the old West Side, among the thronging pavements of the New York Ghetto. I had gone shopping in wonderful places where the whole dingy room was a subdued glow from dusty Damascus brasses; I had haggled over candlesticks in Allen Street cellars; I had bought embroideries in Chinatown. Always Robert was the companion of my expeditions, often the instigator of them. I met a few of his friends, pleasant girls, agreeable young men. When he had finally made up his mind not to avoid me as inimical to his designs, he certainly made over my life for me.

I thought of it all in a crowded second then, when he put the question to me. And I trembled a little, thinking what might have befallen me if he had not been kind and—neighborly. What companionship would I have been forced to in sheer loneliness? A swift vision of Lester Franklin's tawdry Bohemia flashed before me; and then the laughing eyes of Archibald Charter. I turned to Robert with a big thankfulness in my heart. If I had saved him from any loss of self-respect, from what had he saved me?

We had a foolish afternoon, sampling all the attractions of the beach, eating peanuts, buying candy, having our fortunes told, watching the bathers contend with the refuse in the waves. Then we took a chugging little train and went to the adjoining beach for dinner. The moon, big and yellow, lifted an eye above the rim of the ocean while we were still at table. Liking the prospect, apparently, she slowly raised herself and the early evening was beautiful with light.

Somehow we seemed loath to leave the place. We walked out to the beach and fell to watching the water and the broad path of radiance across it.

"Ellen," said Robert suddenly, "you know why I wanted you to know the basest things about me?"

I knew; my heart was big in my breast with a solemn joy and gratitude; and, as I suppose is always true of the heights of happiness, the moment was poignant with undefined pain, too. Such vast possibilities of rapture in this life of ours—such miserable makeshifts for joy! Oh, why could not we all have equal happiness, equal worthiness?

"You know why?" said Robert again.

The sob of bliss and pain that strangled me broke on my lips. My hand went out to Robert's, and he kissed me.

Afterward we found it very amusing

that the socially ambitious Mr. Robert Matthews had proposed to Mr. George Hennen's typewriter on the beach at Coney Island. But we didn't laugh that evening. And as I slowly made ready for bed that night, moving softly lest I should disturb the dream that enveloped me, I suddenly found myself on my knees by the bed, crying inarticulately: "Suppose you hadn't been here, my dear; suppose you hadn't been here!"

A well-regulated story should end with a proposal and the purchase of her trousseau by the bride-elect. But mine refused to adapt itself to tradition. It was no less necessary for me to struggle with the mortgage than it had been before. It was all very well for Robert to say that mother should always make her home with us; he had not consulted mother on that subject yet, and I knew her prejudices against the chimney-corner amiably provided for the aged by youthful households. I had contributed about a hundred and fifty dollars to the fund which was finally to free us from our debt, but that was only about one-tenth of the sum needed for our complete enfranchisement.

In spite of Miss O'Dowd's admirable advice, I found myself now unable to resist the atmosphere and the example of the office. I had tremblingly ventured a small sum in L. D. & M. R. stock, which Mr. Hennen, after a blink of astonishment, consented to buy for me in one of his own lots. The next week Mr. Charter, who had heard of the transaction and had some rumor of the mortgage, came to me with a roll of bills, announcing that they were mine; that he had invested fifty dollars for me in something which was performing acrobatic feats that day, and that the sum he held represented my winnings, minus the fifty-dollar investment and his commission. I don't know what the sum may have been; I declined it somewhat bruskly, and a little later I heard him dictating a humorous letter to the treasurer of the Fruit and Flower Mission, informing him that the enclosed check represented a day's winnings of a suddenly converted stock-gambler; whereupon we both laughed, and the air was clear again.

Altogether my financial situation was such that there was no prospect of immediate marriage for me. Robert and I decided, therefore, to announce our engagement only to our immediate families, and to await the outcome of at least a year of work before we took the irrevocable step.

The next few weeks gave me every opportunity to test the quality of my happiness and the durability of the benevolent glow which it had aroused in me. Mr. Hennen was nervous and irritable; Mr. Charter, who was away a good deal, ignored me when he did come in. His manner had hardened curiously, not only toward me but apparently toward the world in general. In his conversations with his partner he seemed curt almost to the point of rudeness. Then, too, the heat was somewhat trying to the nerves and temper of a young woman who had never experienced a summer in the city before.

The cause of Mr. Hennen's irritability was not far to seek. He had indeed succeeded in obtaining control of a great deal of the L. D. & M. R. stock, but, once it was in his possession, the plans of the steamship company seemed to undergo a change. There was no more rumor of a Southern port for it, and the Great Trans-Continental continued to carry Western and Middle West freight cheerfully into New York. Mr. Hennen seemed as far from its directorate as ever. All that he had succeeded in doing so far was to reduce the price of a stock in which he himself was heavily interested, for the L. D. & M. R. did not recover at once from the slump which he had engineered.

The house was lonely and rather forbidding. Theresa Putnam and Lester Franklin had gone for the summer, and so had the earnest medical students. The drawing-room was cool but not inviting in écru holland, and one viewed the pictures through an impressionistic mist of mosquito-netting. The doctor's office in the basement was crowded every day with a forlorn string of hot-weather waifs and their guardians, the latter of-

ten children little older than the sick babies who made up most of her summer clientele.

But through all the loneliness of the house and all the frets of the office, I managed to preserve a cheerful spirit. Robert was spending the summer in town, and I saw him almost every day. Our habits were such as might have been expected from a pair who had become engaged on the Coney Island beach. We prowled in the big parks, we took Sunday excursions with the rest of the mob on boat or train or trolley, we ate queer dinners in front of East Side restaurants which had a continental addition in the shape of a sidewalk enclosure screened by dusty arbor-vitæ plants in dingy green boxes, we played golf on the public links and tennis on the public courts. It amazed and delighted me a good deal, by the way, to discover what ample provision the big city makes for its children's play-time. They tell me that Boston does even better; that there are public swimming-schools as well as public parks, and opportunities for all sorts of aquatic sports as well as for those of the land. But I had not been to Boston, and the great chain of parks north of Manhattan—Pelham, Bronx, and Van Cortlandt—with all their varied attractions, seemed to me the climax of municipal generosity.

Happiness and companionship kept me well, as I have said. One Friday afternoon Mrs. George Hennen, blowing breezily in from Southampton, where the Hennens had taken a house for part of the summer, commented on my looks as she waited to drag her husband and her brother away with her.

"How do you manage to keep so fresh looking?" she demanded. Then, without waiting for an answer, she hurried on: "Isn't Miss Berwick a marvel, Archie? Look at her, George. She's an advertisement for your system—a whole letter of recommendation for your treatment. Or"—she looked at me quizzically and laughed—"or maybe you're in love. I've always found that there was no beautifier or rejuvenator equal to that."

Of course they all looked at me; and I blushed uncomfortably under their scrutiny. Mr. Charter's only comment on the situation was a sardonic laugh as he turned away. I could not blame him for greeting any mention of the tender passion with scorn, for it was an office secret that his domestic affairs were approaching a climax of unpleasantness. Almost each week now the *Gotham Gossiper* had a debonair paragraph concerning the imminence of a divorce and the probable realliances of the Charters.

They had all departed and I was finishing up my work when the door burst noisily open, and one of George Hennen's allies in the Louisiana Delta deal dashed in. He was disgusted to hear that he had missed his friend by so short a margin.

"Won't be back till Monday, eh?"

"Surely not until Monday," I answered, "and possibly not before Tuesday. Mr. Hennen sometimes stays at Southampton over Monday."

"Well, he's got to come back this time before Tuesday, even before Sunday. The Transatlantic people have put through that affair, Miss Berwick, and I want to get hold of Hennen at once. What train was he taking? The three-fifteen? Well, I'll telegraph him on that, and he can turn around and come back." Then he rolled out to send his message, whistling jubilantly, "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight."

Thus began one of the big fights on Wall Street. As soon as the steamship company's plans were known, the Great Trans-Continental, as Mr. Hennen had foreseen, began to negotiate for the purchase, or a lease for a very long term of years, of the Louisiana Delta and Mississippi River Railroad. I had supposed, in my unsophistication, that the matter would be very briefly settled; that Mr. Hennen and the other directors of the small road would make their terms, that the big road would demur at first and would then fall in with the plan. It never occurred to me that they would carry their demurring to the point which they did. I think there must have been some old score to be

settled, some old grudge to be paid off. Certainly the present situation seemed to me to call for no such system of reprisals as that which was inaugurated those breathless, suffocating summer days.

Obstinately holding out against Mr. Hennen's demands, determinedly refusing to buy the L. D. & M. R. stock at the high figure at which he held it, the Great Trans-Continental people began to hammer at all of our securities. Why the likelihood of this had escaped George Hennen's mind, I am sure I do not know. But it seemed to be the one thing for which he was not prepared. The price of all those holdings in which we were richest was steadily and vindictively decreased through the manipulation of the hostile mind which was directing the fight for the big railway.

It was interesting to watch the effect of the unexpected resistance upon George Hennen. Each day added a line to his forehead and deepened the ones about his lips. He was, as I think I have said, a boyish-looking man, slender and rather blond. There was something almost delicate about the contour of his face. But suddenly about his jaw and chin a rigid, bulldog expression appeared. His eyes, sinking deeper into his head with fresh anxieties, burned steadily with the light of unshakable resolution. Whether the warfare upon which he was embarked was worthy or unworthy, there was no doubt he meant to fight to a finish—to a victory.

The victory, however, seemed likely to cost him dear before he obtained it. His nerves were undoubtedly giving way under the strain of the constant battering. Rich man though he was, he was not a Midas, and the steady depreciation of many of his stocks could not keep up indefinitely without ruining the firm. However, on the other hand, he was making things unpleasant for the Great Trans-Continental, and it, almost as little as he himself, could afford to prolong a war of extermination. His partner, meantime, watched him with a sympathy that seemed curiously impersonal for a member of the firm, and much more intense and anxious than one would have expected from a man of Mr. Charter's easy temperament.

One day George Hennen came in from the Exchange in the afternoon looking almost drunk. His straw hat was rakishly over his left ear, his cravat was awry, his face was pastily white and damp with perspiration. His hair was rumpled and his eyes brightly glazed. Instead of going into his own room, he sank upon the easiest chair in the anteroom, where my desk was.

"May I smoke?" he asked me. "Thanks—got to. Done up. Where's Charter? Hasn't gone home, of course."

Gone home! I don't think that Tommy, who usually welcomed every opportunity of escape from the office, could have been driven out of sound of the ticker that day when the fortunes of Hennen & Charter hung in the balance. Mr. Charter emerged from his own offices, looking even more ill than his partner.

"We've got 'em beaten, Archie," mumbled George Hennen almost inarticulately. "Got 'em beaten. They'll fire their last gun to-morrow—you know, the corn business. But we can stand 'em off, and then they've done their damnedest. There's nothing left for them to do after they try to corner the corn that we've agreed to deliver. They can't do that, and the day after to-morrow they'll capitulate. You'll see. There'll be a message from old man Peters early in the morning—maybe even to-morrow afternoon. We'll get what we want. We'll get what we ask for, Archie, old man."

I had never heard the chief, as the office called him when it did not call him boss or old man, so garrulous. The idea that he was intoxicated persisted with me. And so he was, but not with drink, but with the more potent excitement of battle on the 'Change. Archibald Charter looked at him out of wretched eyes for several seconds. It seemed to me that almost a groan was his first answer to George Hennen's prophecy of victory. Then he spoke.

"How are you going to stand them off to-morrow?" he asked.

"We'll have to put up the South African bonds for a day or so," answered Mr. Hennen more articulately than he had spoken before. "They'll be good for five hundred thousand dollars, and that will pull us through. We must get it early in the morning from the Nth National."

This time it seemed to me that there was no mistake about the groan that Archibald Charter uttered. His partner looked at him inquiringly.

"Brace up, Archie," he advised, and seemed to pull himself together with the sentence. He went into his own office, and a few minutes later summoned me. He had recovered his usual air of almost foppish correctness, and his voice, as he dictated, was clear and firm. There was no hesitation in his thoughts, either, and in an hour he had given me enough work to keep me busy with transcribing for most of the evening.

"You won't mind finishing those tonight, Miss Berwick?" he asked, as the session ended. "I hate to ask you to stay, but it's rather important."

Of course I was very glad to stay. He had been a most considerate employer, and my position had been a remarkably easy one. I was only too glad of an opportunity to repay him for the afternoon hours which he was always giving me.

I called up Robert's office to let him know that I would not be at home that evening. He was not in, and I left a message directing him to telephone to me when he came in. Then I requested our telephone-boy to connect me when he left the office in such a way that I would not miss any message.

By and by the office was empty. The only sound in it was the clatter of my own typewriter keys. The electric light above my desk burned hot and white upon my face; the throb of the city came in through the open windows. I was working busily, having decided to forego dinner until I heard from Robert. Perhaps he would be moved to come down-town and dine with me, and afterward I could finish my letters.

I had moved across the room to lower a window, when the telephone on my desk rang sharply. The sash was a little refractory, and it was perhaps three or four seconds before I had gained the instrument. When I put the receiver to my ear I was astonished to hear a conversation already begun. Something checked the "Hello!" that was on my lips. I thought I recognized Ferritt's voice. Was he still in the office?

There was no doubt that he was in the office, that he labored under the delusion that he was the only person in the office, and that he had made the same arrangement with the bland and obliging telephone-boy that I had. His conversation was interesting and unmistakable. I kept the receiver at my ear, and without a single qualm listened to every word. He was informing a representative of the Great Trans-Continental of George Hennen's plans for the next day. I heard the words, "South African bonds"; I heard an impatient ejaculation from the other party to the conversation. "We can't hold him up, then," said the voice. "Oh, yes, you can," answered Ferritt reassuringly; "the bonds aren't in the safe."

There was more talk after this, but I did not make out the gist of it. My mind was stunned by the revelation that the means of warfare had been taken out of George Hennen's hands, and that he did not know it. I began to wonder where I could reach him to tell him what I had overheard. The conversation ended; I heard the "good-by," and still sat for a few dazed minutes with the receiver to my ear. Then the bell rang sharply again, and Robert's voice greeted me.

At dinner I dallied with the thought of telling him the situation. But the habit of reticence in regard to the firm's affairs helped to seal my lips, and Robert himself set the final lock upon them. He had had a wearing day, full of anxieties over the shortcomings of contractors, and he needed sympathy. He was in no condition to assume any of the burdens of Hennen & Charter. So I ate my dinner without perception of flavors, and with a confused buzzing in

the back of my head about an empty safe.

After dinner I went back to the office. This time there seemed to be no question as to my being alone. All the rooms were deserted, and all the cages behind the long wire partition were empty. I am an orderly person myself, and had left the lid of my desk down upon all my papers and the typewriter when I went out, so that my room also presented an appearance of entire abandonment.

I took off my hat and hung it up. I peeled off my gloves, and moved toward the desk. A sound arrested me. I listened. It seemed to come from Mr. Charter's room. But I had seen him go out hours before. I stood nervously wondering if I dared to go to the door and investigate. A melodramatic notion that Ferritt was in the private office engaged in some nefarious occupation struck me. Then the silence seemed complete again, and I thought I was the victim of mere imagination. I put my hand upon the cover of my desk to lift it, and this time I heard an unmistakable step in Mr. Charter's room.

I moved across the carpeted floor swiftly to the door. If Ferritt was in there, I wanted to be sure of it. If he was not, if some stranger had gained admission to the office, I wanted to know that. I did not give myself time to conjure up horrible possibilities of attack by robbers and the like. I turned the knob and pushed the door open.

Something fell heavily on Mr. Charter's desk. Some one rose from behind it. It was Mr. Charter himself. He stared at me so wildly, in such inexplicable alarm, that instead of retreating with an apology for my intrusion, I advanced farther into the room. When I had reached the middle of it I saw what had fallen upon his desk. It was a revolver.

Whether my eyes were sharpened by excitement or not, I can't tell. I made out clearly the superscription on the letter lying beside the revolver—it was to George Hennen. Then I raised my eyes again to the man, still staring at me speechless and motionless. My own mind refused to work, to construct the tragedy from all its constituents. Finally he broke the heavy silence.

"Good God!" he groaned. "To think that you were out there!"

The words were like a key to the situation; a door seemed to swing wide and show me all the terror that some paralysis of my faculties had kept closed from me. He had thought himself utterly alone. Unhappy, desperate, he had determined to die. And now, stayed in his purpose by my unexpected appearance, his first articulate expression was one of horror at the thought of the hideousness in which he might have involved me. He might be the chief of cowards, fleeing from the consequences of his weakness by the most disgraceful road; but not for worlds would he frighten or shock a woman. Illogical creature—but there was a little thrill of gratitude in my heart, almost of pride.

He moved backward a step and tried to throw a paper over the weapon on his desk, while he remarked, with the ghost of his old, debonair manner:

"We seem to have surprised each other thoroughly, Miss Berwick. I had no notion you were here so late——"

"It's no use," I interrupted him, pointing to the hidden revolver. "I saw it, Mr. Charter. And, oh, thank Heaven, thank Heaven, that I came in! You can't do that—not to-night of all nights! Oh, I am so thankful you are here. Listen! The South African certificates are not in the safe!"

He started. Then he sat down suddenly and began to laugh.

"You tell me that?" He said it with a peculiar emphasis on the first personal pronoun. "How did you know?"

A vague misgiving crossed my mind—he had taken the information itself in such an unastonished way. I told him briefly of the conversation I had overheard with Ferritt.

"Ferritt!" he cried, his brow darkening. He mused frowningly for a second. "I have suspected that cheap spy of double-dealing for a long time. But——"

"Could he have removed them—stolen them?" I asked breathlessly, ap-

palled at the thought of the magnitude of the crime. Mr. Charter turned a puzzled look upon me.

"Oh, the certificates? Ferritt?" Then he stared at me, a resolve slowly growing upon his whitening face. "No, Miss Berwick; Ferritt could not have removed the bonds. The only persons who have the combination to the securities safe are George Hennen and myself."

He waited, watching me intently.

"Then, how——" I began stupidly. Slowly the idea dawned upon me. I met his steady look wildly.

"No, no!" I cried, thrusting back with all my strength the horrible suspicion that clamored at the door of my mind for entrance. "No!"

"But yes." He spoke with a measured weariness. "Yes, good, honest little Ellen. And that explains this"—he touched the revolver lightly. "It is not my domestic troubles, though God knows they're miserable and sordid enough to drive me to suicide. It's not remorse for my sins. It's because I'm a common thief, who has ruined my firm and my partner and friend. That is why I—almost regret your presence here to-night."

I do not know how long the stunned silence lasted. By and by I was conscious, through the meaningless whirl in the back of my brain, that Archibald Charter was talking. He was telling me the ugly story of his misspent life, of his gambling, his debts, his dissipations; of the private speculation with which he sought to free himself from the network of liabilities in which he was wound; of the failure of effort after effort; and, finally, of his removing the bonds during one of George Hennen's absences, of raising money on them, and of losing the money!

"So this is the logical end, Miss Berwick," he finished. "Until George reads this letter to-morrow and learns how I have undone him, you are the only person alive who knows me the dishonored thing I am. I can't live—I won't live—to see any other face with the light of that knowledge upon it!"

I had been too stunned to feel repugnance. Indeed, when I had roused myself sufficiently to listen to him, I found that he carried the old charm into even this base recital. There was pity in my heart. But his last words changed the current of my thoughts.

"You poor coward!" I said.

"Coward?" He seemed astonished.

"You are brave enough to gamble and carouse, brave enough to speculate, brave enough to steal, to condemn your partner and friend to failure in one of the great fights of his life; but you're not brave enough to meet your punishment. Oh, a pistol-shot is not punishment. You've got to face their scorn, you've got to get them out of this trouble."

He shook his head drearily. "Impossible," he said.

"Of course it's impossible if you let George Hennen come here to-morrow morning unaware that he has no chance for the day's battle. You've got to warn him—you've got to help him prepare in some new way. Then, if you want to, you can kill yourself. It will not be an irreparable loss then."

When I heard the last bitter words I was suddenly ashamed of them. "Oh, I didn't mean that!" I cried. "Indeed, indeed, I didn't. You must live, to make it all over—your life. You must live—or—the world would never seem right again."

He sprang to his feet, a light in his eyes. Then he sank down again in his chair and shook his head.

"Take charge, then, for to-night," he said wearily.

I have thought since that all his resolution, all his nerve-power, had been called upon to bring him to the point of self-destruction at which I had interrupted him, and that it was solely to the inertia, the languor, following that supreme exertion of strength, that I owed my opportunity that night. As my determination mounted, his energy seemed to decrease. Finally, when I reached the point of telephoning to George Hennen's house, Archibald sat collapsed in his chair and watched me with dull, indifferent eyes.

Half-an-hour brought not only

George Hennen, but his wife as well. She had come up to town dutifully to be with her husband during the days of the big fight. Her beautiful eyes were dark with anxiety as she came in.

"It's Archie!" she cried, seizing my hand. "It is—I've felt it all day."

When he saw her he came out of his lethargy, came out with a sharp protest of shame and pain.

"Oh, Sis!" he cried. "Not you—not here!"

She walked swiftly to his desk and stood beside his chair, her arm thrown around his shoulder. She looked at her husband and me defiantly, all the protecting love of her heart given at that moment to her brother.

"Of course I'm here," she said. "Where else? Archie, no matter what it is, I'm here—with you!"

That was the only dramatic incident of the night. The story of the loss of the bonds George Hennen heard without a word of rage or blame. He wasted no force in accusations, in recriminations, or apparently in the thought of what had happened. All that was dismissed—temporarily, perhaps—to leave his mind free to meet the situation. My respect for his method, my understanding of his success, were complete from that night. He wasted no time, no force, in lamenting the irreparable. Forewarned, he proceeded to forearm himself against the next day's battle. Those bonds gone, where could he raise before ten o'clock in the morning the security for the sums they had represented? His unbacked credit, he knew, would not suffice after the hammering he had been subjected to for a week.

There was some midnight telephoning. Then two electric hansoms were sent down to us, and, Mrs. Hennen and I in one, the men in the other, we slipped up the long, bright, half-empty street. As we passed the City Hall Park we saw some of the strays of fortune huddled in sleep on the benches. Corinna Hennen caught my hand as she looked, and a little sigh shivered through her lips.

At the Union Club we waited while the men went inside to a conference with a friendly magnate who fortunately combined practically unlimited wealth, animosity against old Peters of the Great Trans-Continental, and a liking for Archibald Charter. Here the men succeeded in getting a conveyance for four—I imagine they had no desire at that moment for a further tête-à-tête, having exhausted the possibility of explanation and understanding on the uptown drive—and we all climbed into it.

"That's done," said George Hennen briefly. "Driver—what is your number, Miss Berwick? Oh, yes, 23 West Eleventh."

The carriage rolled smoothly down the empty street. Now and then from the window-boxes of a club or a benevolent private house a whiff of dewy sweetness was borne. The far, high sky was the very heart of blueness; the electric lights converged in long, silver aisles toward the noble arch at the foot of the street. The tears in my eyes suddenly blurred and multiplied them.

At the door George Hennen's wife took me in a close embrace and kissed me with a passionate gratitude. And then, to my utter surprise, I felt George Hennen's tears on my hand as he raised it to his lips. His brother-in-law stood remote, looking at me with a strangely working face.

The door slammed upon them all, the wheels rolled through the quiet street again, and I staggered up-stairs. The morning sun found me lying, a rumpled heap, on the top of the couch, where I had thrown myself to the sleep of utter exhaustion.

If Robert and I would defer our marriage a year, it might be celebrated in the Memorial Chapel which he is to build at Agonquitt for the elder Mrs. Hennen—not altogether to her comprehension, I think; it was her son and her daughter-in-law who persuaded her that she must do that for her native place. Robert has also on his list of orders a library building which Archibald Charter designs to bestow upon the Ohio city whence the Charters came. One of the Hennens' cousins has or-

dered a Florentine castle at Newport, and, altogether, the Hennen connection has launched him magnificently in business. Some time, perhaps, he will have leisure to plan a house for a modest, unambitious young married couple. Meantime, the twin of Dr. Lyons' attic-roofed dwelling, standing next to hers, appeals to us both as architecturally and sentimentally satisfactory. To-day I have unscrewed my grandfather's brass knocker from his front door to set it up again on West Eleventh Street.



ROMANCE

"ROMANCE is dead," the cynic said;
"With knighthood it has passed away.
The useless armor's rust is red—
Who does or dares for love to-day?

"The shield whereon the lover wore
His lady's colors is no more.
The charger stands with drooping head,
Tied in his stall—romance is dead."

A woman, young and glad and fair,
Stepped lightly forth and deigned to pause;
The cynic looked and longed to dare
And do to win her sweet applause.

She tarried but a little while
And gave him but a passing smile,
Yet as they went their ways he thought
Of knights in armor richly wrought.

He saw himself with shield and lance
Whereon her colors brightly shone;
He felt his steed beneath him prance,
And for her life he risked his own.

The armor rusts behind the door,
The knight rides forth to just no more,
But o'er romance say no last prayer
While men are strong and women fair.

S. E. KISER.

CAPTAIN COSGROVE'S HOMEOPATHIC CURE



By L. Frank Tooker

THE lagging wind, which had blown fitfully for two days, dropped behind while the *Mary Ellen* was still in the shadow of the lower Palisades; but when, in the middle of the drowsy afternoon, the ebb-tide also turned, and the schooner began to drift down-stream, Captain Cosgrove hailed the tug of a big river tow, and shortly after had made fast to another schooner at the tail of a long procession of canal-boats going light up to Albany.

Hot and tired, but care-free, he seated himself upon the forward end of the house with the pleasurable feeling that all responsibility was past and his Albany trip virtually over, except for the mere matter of the passage of time. And time, in that languid spring air, seemed little more than an avatar of exquisite but subdued emotion—an orderly succession of days filled with peace and a vague sensation of beauty.

It was early in May and four of the afternoon, and the shadow of the Palisades lay cool across the deck. Westward the water lay dark under the heights, the reflections of which showed wavering and distorted lines under the unending procession of long, low swells pushed out from the bows of the many boats that made up the tow. Eastward the river shone like silver, with the shore beyond lying in full sunlight, a world of delicate reds and greens. Save for the subdued churn of the steamer's screw far ahead, there was no sound stirring; so that when Tom Allen, the mate of the *Mary Ellen*, threw down a coil of running rigging, the sharp fall on the hollow deck was almost painful.

It startled Captain Cosgrove, and he looked up as Allen drew near.

"Well, this is something like," he said—"no work, no worry, an' goin' right along all the time, an' knowin' you're goin' to keep it up. Blame' if I don't sell out an' buy a canal-boat an' end my days in peace! Ye don't have nothin' to do, but ye think ye have; an' what's any man want more'n that? Then there's all this"—he swung his arm outward in vague acknowledgment of the beauty of the scene. "Kin'l o' like the garden of Eden, ain't it?"

"Well, if you're goin' to have a garden of Eden, you'll want an Eve in it," replied Allen. He grinned and nodded toward the schooner alongside. "There she is now, a-readin' a book same 's if she didn't know there's an Adam next door. Guess she don't know what a lady-killer you are, cap'n."

Captain Cosgrove disdained to reply or look, and Allen walked aft, with his eyes turned with a pleasurable interest on the good-looking girl who sat on the quarter-deck of the neighboring schooner. He descended into the cabin, but presently returned to the deck with an accession of adornment that seemed an expression of his hope that the book would not always continue to be absorbing. He had put on his coat and a flowing red neck-scarf, and the straight, white part of his smoothly brushed hair gave evidence of much painstaking care. In his hand he carried a camera.

His very evident desire to take a photograph seemed greater than his satisfaction with any particular view; but after turning many times to all points of the compass, with his eyes fixed upon the finding-glass, he finally brought the camera to a rest upon the reading girl. The shutter clicked.

At the sound the girl glanced indifferently toward him, then dropped her eyes to her book again, with just the slight change in her position that left her back hair, rather than her profile, visible from the place where he stood. A moment later she left the deck, and he walked over to Captain Cosgrove's side.

"Kind o' stiff, wa'n't she?" asked the captain, grinning unsympathetically.

"Kind o'," admitted Allen.

"Ye fixed up too much for her on the start," said the captain, eying his subordinate critically. "What ye should have done was to roll up your sleeves, muss up your hair, an' pretend not to see her. Then she'd be'n castin' sheeps'-eyes at ye 'stead o' turnin' her back. But fixin' up looked 's if ye expected to sail right in an' win. That put her on her mettle. Women is kind o' contrary."

"I *thought* you was mighty offish, settin' out here with your back to her," replied Allen. "Still, I didn't see her castin' no sheeps'-eyes this way." He walked forward, and when he again came aft, Captain Cosgrove was sitting on the rail amidships, talking with the captain of the other schooner.

"No," Captain Cosgrove was saying, "I ain't in no partic'lar hurry; but I got tired of bobbin' back an' forth across the river, an' never gittin' nowhere, an' anchorin' ev'ry ebb-tide. Got your fam'ly aboard, I see, Cap'n Luce."

"Yes; all I got—one daughter," replied the other. He was a big, loose-jointed man, with a deep, rumbling voice. He lowered it as he looked aft and said: "More trouble 'an a dozen, one is. A dozen kind o' balance, an' keep each other straight; but one!" He shook his head hopelessly.

"I kind o' thought she didn't look much interested in things," Captain Cosgrove ventured to say.

"She ain't. Ye see, she lives with my sister, an' they're too easy—let a young feller I don't like hang around too much. So says I: 'My girl, I suppose you're ordained to git married one o' these days, but I'm goin' to see to it that it's a man, not a whipper-snapper like that.' So I packed her off with me. She don't like it."

Captain Cosgrove nodded sympathetically.

"Great doin's in this end of the world," he said musingly. "Parents don't seem to count with 'em these days; they think they know it all."

"They do," agreed Captain Luce, with feeling.

They sat on in silence, but finally Captain Cosgrove spoke.

"I don't suppose ye count on curin' her this trip."

"I do an' I don't," replied Captain Luce. "Ye see, I got a person in mind up the river—a nice, middle-aged man I took to right off. I showed him her picture last time I was up, an' he seemed a good deal interested. Wanted me to bring her up. Now, if I could git her interested, too——"

"'Tain't as easy 's fallin' off a log," said Captain Cosgrove. "Still, if he's well fixed——"

"He's well fixed," Captain Luce assured him.

"Well, that's a good deal," continued Captain Cosgrove. "I could tell ye some queer doin's in that line; know the cases myself."

"Well, we'll see," replied the other, rising at the sound of his supper-bell.

At his own supper-table Captain Cosgrove explained the situation to his mate.

"That there girl's love-sick," he told Allen; "that's why she wouldn't notice ye. When a girl's so, half the time she won't look at another man, an' half the time she won't do anything else. You struck her at the wrong time." Then he told what he had learned of her father.

"Where's she hail from?" asked Allen.

"North Shore; her name's Luce—Mattie Luce."

He was sitting on his rail amidships, talking with Captain Luce again, when Allen went up on deck, and, seating himself on the taffrail, watched the sunset clouds changing over the Palisades. Under the dusky heights the shad-fishermen were hauling their nets,

and he could hear them calling from boat to boat. Somewhere along the shore a kingfisher's shrill, scolding squawk sounded clearly, and from the east side of the river came the subdued rattle of a train. The sounds made him lonely, and he was longing for the shore when the girl appeared.

Something of his own feeling of loneliness must have moved her also, for she walked to her own taffrail, and, leaning her hand upon the davit nearest him, seemed in nowise affected adversely by his presence.

He looked up, and their eyes met.

"Nice night," he ventured to say in a voice that he tried to make wholly impersonal.

"Isn't it?" she replied. Then she added: "But it's lonely out here. It makes me homesick."

"It is lonely," he admitted; "but, then, I'm used to that."

"I suppose so," she answered. "I don't think I could get enough used to it not to mind, ever."

"You can get used to almost anything," he told her.

"I suppose so." She sighed, then looked at him. "Father says you are Long Island folks, too. We're from North Shore. It made me feel almost acquainted."

"I knew your vessel was Long Island built," he said, "though I didn't recognize her. I've sailed off-shore mostly. I just came along with Cap'n Cosgrove for a little change. I've been in North Shore, but I guess I never saw you."

"Well, I was there," she replied, with a laugh. "Seems to me I've always been there."

He nodded sympathetically.

"I guess I know what that means," he said. "Time goes slow when you just stay in one place." Apparently he wished to have no part in the stagnation of time, for he rose, and, crossing over, seated himself by her side. "I've got relations in North Shore," he went on—"the Allens. I suppose you know them."

"Not Lucy Allen!" she exclaimed. "Why, she's my best friend."

"She's my cousin," he acknowledged.

"Well, if the world isn't small!" she cried. "To think of our meeting off here, and knowing the same people!"

"It's happenin' all the time, all over the world," he told her, "though that doesn't make this time any less strange or pleasant—to me."

She laughed, bridling, and looked at him through lowered eyes.

"Of course you'd say that," she told him.

"Well, I mean it," he said stoutly. "I guess my takin' your picture proved that."

"I guess it proved you were impudent," she declared.

"It was a nice picture—the schooner an' all," he answered defensively. "I don't get a chance like that ev'ry day. You can't get many nice pictures aboard a vessel. I always take some when I go ashore."

She giggled.

"Yes," she said, trying to speak severely; "I guess most sailors take something when they go ashore. I don't trust any of them; they're too wild."

"Well, that ain't me," he replied; "I ain't a drinkin' man."

"You think well of yourself, don't you?" she said.

"Well, I want somebody to," he answered.

"I never heard your cousin Lucy speak of you," she now said. "I guess she didn't dare. I suppose that's why you never come to see her."

"I'll come often enough now," he replied—"now that I know you."

She caught her breath sharply, and looked down at her hands, which she clasped and unclasped in her lap in a sort of unconscious elation in the little game of life that they were beginning to play. It was all commonplace and trivial enough, and to neither significant; but the souls of most of us, thank Heaven! come tremblingly together with only a modicum of wit and learning. Boy Cupid has never yet felt the need of a quiver of epigrams.

Meanwhile, on the rail amidships, Captain Luce was growing impatient.

"Deuce take it!" he grumbled, as a

burst of laughter floated forward. "I don't know's I want that mate of yours so much to home on my vessel. Who is he, anyway?"

Captain Cosgrove was irritated.

"Now, see here, Captain Luce," he said warmly, "ye don't want to go an' git excited ev'ry time a young man speaks to that girl o' yours. That ain't no way to act. Ye want to let her see 's many 's she can; then she'll git accustomed to the sect. Most gen'rally, when a girl sets a man on a monument, it's because she's never known men enough so 's to git a line on the rest. If ye want her to forgit that other feller, let her see enough on 'em to git 'em confused in her mind. That's good home'path doctrine; besides, it's horse sense."

"Think so?" queried Captain Luce doubtfully.

"Think so? I know so," Captain Cosgrove replied with spirit. "Now, you jest leave me to ingineer this here job. I'm older'n you be. I'll have her cured by the time we reach Albany, an' all you'll have to do will be to waltz that there candidate of yours aboard. 'Twill be plain sailin'."

"Well, if ye think ye can manage it, I'd like it first-rate," said Captain Luce. "Deuce knows, I'm at the end of my rope."

"Jest give me a p'int or two first," replied Captain Cosgrove. "What's that feller of hers do?"

"Clerks it in a store," said Captain Luce, with scorn—"a little, undersized, chalk-faced whiffet."

"Got anything?" asked his friend.

"The clothes on his back an' some high collars he can't scarcely see over without standin' on his toes."

"Good enough!" said Captain Cosgrove, with satisfaction. "Now, you jest watch your uncle manage!"

He was ready to begin the next morning when, at six o'clock, Mattie came up on deck and nodded brightly to him as she walked forward to the main-rigging and looked out across the placid river. The sky was cloudless, the world radiant with the unfolding freshness of the spring. Forward, on the deck of the *Mary Ellen*, the mate and crew were washing down the deck, and the swish of their brooms, the sluicing of water from the deck-bucket, and the soft purr of the exhaust of the tug, were the only sounds in the awakening day as Captain Cosgrove walked over to greet the girl.

"Well, this is something like," he said genially. "I was jest a-wonderin' what it was I lacked. Now I know—somebody to help me enjoy seein' other folks work. Ye can't see much fun in sunrise if you're scrubbin' down decks or washin' dishes, can ye? If I was goin' to be borned over again, I'd be borned rich instid o' handsome. Still, I don't complain. Back to home where I live, my house is on a hill right over the main street, an' ev'ry mornin' early, winter or summer, when I hear the clerks an' storekeepers slammin' doors an' takin' down shutters, an' I know their day's work's begun—an' their wives', too—I turn over an' go to sleep. It kind o' reconciles me to livin'. All a man needs in this world is to have a leetle less to do, an' a leetle more to do with, than his neighbors, then he's happy."

"I guess that's so," said the girl, smiling.

"Of course it's so," declared the captain. "When you come to git married, an' see your neighbors wearin' silk when you've got meriner, you're discontented with your lot; an' if they're wearin' meriner, too, but have got an extra flounce, it's the same." He shook his head an' smiled. "Queer lot, ain't we? But that's the way we're built."

"Then, there doesn't seem any way but just to be unhappy and envious," said the girl soberly.

"'Twould look that way, if you an' me didn't have more jedgment than the gen'ral run of folks," Captain Cosgrove replied; "but good-lookin' people like us"—he winked—"can pick an' choose if we wait. That house o' mine I told ye about above the main street—why, that was my wife's father's. She was a good woman, but it didn't hurt her none that she had consid'rable prop'ty, too. Now, some men folks are tall an' some

short, some one way an' some another; but, within reasonable limits, they're all nothin' more'n jest men. So what ye want to keep in mind, when you're pickin' out any one on 'em, is that you'd look mighty well in your own carriage." He laughed, and, blushing a little, she laughed with him.

"The carriage would be nice," she replied, "but——"

"Of course it would be nice," he declared; then he began to point out places of interest along the river.

It was remarkable what a number of small jobs Allen found to do about the *Mary Ellen*—jobs that, like a woman's fancy-work, could be carried in the pocket, as it were. The day was still young when he found his way across the rail to Mattie's side. He had the captain's glass in his hand, and rather leisurely he prepared to decorate it with Turks'-heads. Once, when the conversation lagged, the girl spoke of his captain.

"I think he's very nice," she said.

Allen looked up quickly.

"Oh, yes, the old man's nice," he agreed; then he grinned. "Hasn't asked ye to marry him yet, has he?" he inquired.

"The idea!" she exclaimed. "Of course not. Why, he spoke of his wife."

"I guess that's the way a widower would begin," Allen said thoughtfully. He looked up at her as he went on: "After beatin' about the bush awhile, he'd probably tell you he had considerable property; then, most likely, he'd tell how lonely he was, an' all that. After that, look out."

The girl blushed and turned her face away, and Allen laughed.

"What! has he told you all that already?" he exclaimed. "Hasn't lost any time, has he?"

"He didn't say anything about being lonely," declared Mattie hotly—"nothing like it. He seemed anything but that."

"But he spoke of his property, didn't he?" he persisted, with twinkling eyes.

"I shan't tell you," she declared.

"Ye don't have to," he told her; "I know."

"Well, then, he didn't," she said triumphantly. She looked up quickly as Captain Cosgrove came over the rail on his way aft to have a chat with her father. As he passed them he glanced at his mate's Turks'-heads and stopped.

"I was thinkin' it might be a good time to tar down the riggin'," he said to Allen. "It needs it some; an' the top of the house wants paintin'. 'Twill be leakin' first we know."

"Yes, sir," Allen replied. "I was thinkin' of that, but concluded I'd do a few odd jobs first. Ye see, Miss Luce don't like the smell of tar an' paint; it makes her sick. I thought I'd better wait till we came down the river."

"Why, I don't——" began Miss Luce; but Allen broke in quickly.

"Of course she wouldn't want to object to anything really needed; but——"

"Oh, well, they ain't no hurry," replied the captain, and walked aft.

"What did you say that for?" demanded the girl indignantly. "Why, I like the smell of tar and paint."

"Well, you don't want that old man hangin' round talkin' of his money an' loneliness, do you?"

"But it wasn't true what you told him," persisted Mattie.

"Well, I don't mind a little lie to save you trouble," he replied generously. "You ought to thank me for that."

"I don't thank any one for telling stories," she said firmly; "besides, he doesn't talk of being lonely. I told you so before. And he talks to father, not me—mostly."

One of his crew came to the rail to ask for some rattling stuff, and Allen rose.

"I'll give him just ten minutes to talk to your father when he sees I'm gone; then he'll come back. Now, see if I don't know what I'm talkin' about." He went off chuckling.

"I was jest a-tellin' your father what we ought to take ye to see when we git up the river," said Captain Cosgrove, coming around the corner of the house and seating himself on the hatch

near Mattie. "It's mighty lonesome for a woman on a vessel; we'll have to make it up somehow. I knows what it is winters when I'm to home with nothin' to do. Why, there's times when I'm alone in that big house, with not a soul to speak to, I'd be happy jest to have a cat to rub up ag'in' me."

"Oh, I don't need anything," replied the girl hastily. "I like it here."

He shook his head, unconvinced.

"You'd make the best of it, of course," he went on; "that's your nature. I see right off that you was mighty sensible. But young folks has a right to a good time, an' it's their own fault if they don't have it. Now, that's what I call my strong p'int—a younger man would think only of himself; but I'm old enough to appreciate the rights of others."

"I'm sure of that," the girl replied nervously; "but I don't need anything." Then she turned her head to avoid seeing Allen, who stood on his own deck smiling at her, and ostentatiously holding his open watch.

Later in the day Captain Cosgrove spoke enthusiastically of her to her father.

"I tell ye, she's got sense," he declared. "Don't know's I ever saw a young person with more. You ain't understood her, Cap'n Luce; you ain't understood her at all. Now, I've give' her good advice in my roundabout way, an' she listens eagerlike to ev'rything, same 's it was gospel. Guess it is pretty good gospel, too, if ye look at it right."

"Did you mention that there friend o' mine up to Albany?" asked Captain Luce.

"Lord, no!" replied the other. "It's the principle I'm after, not the application. She'll see that all right, come the time."

"Well, I hope so," said Captain Luce. "It does seem 's if she got on first-rate with ye."

There was no wind by night or day, but the tow was long and the steamer slow, and they made but little progress. Then, when they were still miles from their journey's end, they stopped altogether, and the long procession of boats drifted into the bulkhead at a riverside town. Allen went forward to learn the trouble, but soon came back.

"That tug's blown her cylinder-head out," he announced. "Now we're tied up for a day or two."

"Well, they ain't no wind; we'll jest have to make the best of it," replied Captain Cosgrove cheerfully. He was enjoying himself, and was in no haste to bring the journey to a close. To Captain Luce he privately expressed his satisfaction at the delay. "That girl of yours used to have some o' these young folk's argements ag'in' my philosophy, but I don't hear nothin' more about that nowadays. She jest agrees right along, an' I can see she's be'n doin' some thinkin'. Now, this stop kind o' puts the capsheaf on the business. I call it providential."

After supper, in the soft twilight, the two captains went ashore; but the little river town had no attraction for them. On the string-piece of the wharf they sat down, and, with the river lapping at their feet, in calm content they talked on of the sea, which never loosens its hold on those whom it once takes to its bosom. Somewhere back on the dusky, tree-lined streets a church bell broke the hush with its mellow clangor. Mattie, sitting on the deck of her father's vessel with Allen, turned eagerly to listen.

"It makes me sad," she said. "It makes me think of home, and the people walking on the streets, and the smell of syringa-blossoms, and everything."

"Get your hat," said Allen, "an' we'll walk the streets an' smell syringa-blossoms here, too. That ain't askin' much."

There were groups of young people strolling about when they went ashore, and the captains, with their faces turned down the river, failed to notice the two until they stood beside them.

"Father," said the girl, "I thought I'd like to take a little walk. I've been aboard so long, I'm tired. We'll be right back."

"Where ye want to walk to?" asked Captain Luce. "They ain't nothin' to

see here, an' it's dark. Besides, we might start."

"We can't start to-night," said Allen.

"Well, ye can't see anything," persisted Captain Luce.

"There's a nice soldiers' monument up in the square," suggested Captain Cosgrove. "She might like to see that."

"Well, go show her where it is, cap'n," said Captain Luce.

"I don't want to see any monument," replied Mattie; "I'm going aboard." And aboard she went, with her head in the air.

Captain Luce was the first to break the long silence that followed.

"I don't believe in young girls gallivantin' about the streets," he explained apologetically. He was very evidently ill at ease; but Captain Cosgrove made no reply.

"Ye never know about these here river towns," went on Captain Luce; "lots of rough characters hangin' about."

"I've noticed this about fathers," said Captain Cosgrove with seeming irrelevance; "they most gen'rally say 'No' on principle. Seems to be easier for them. It kind o' looks as if they thought children were bound to be wrong, an' sayin' 'No' to ev'rything saved trouble. Now, I never had no children, but seems to me I'd done diff'rent. Now, take this case: your girl's gone off mad, an' nine times out o' ten when a woman's mad she stays mad till ye own up you was wrong jest to have peace in the fam'ly. Mebbe you was right; but that don't make no diff'rence. Ye own up to bein' wrong, an' then they walk right over ye, an' ye can't say a word."

"Well, I guess she didn't care much," replied Captain Luce. "I'll explain how 't was."

"Well, don't explain ye didn't want her gallivantin' round with a young man," said Captain Cosgrove dryly; "for when ye git up to Albany an' bring that young feller of yours around to take her out, mebbe, if she don't take to him first off, she'll bring up your principles. There she'll have ye."

The stars swung silently overhead, the moon came up round and yellow above the low hills, and a breeze crept up the wide reaches of the river. It grew chilly on the wharf, and the captains began to yawn; finally they rose to go aboard. Captain Cosgrove crossed the deck of his neighbor's vessel, and, on his own, paused for a moment to study the sky. Then, walking to the bitts, he cast off the hawsers that made the two schooners fast together, took in a little slack, and made fast again. That done, he was ready to go below. His foot was on the first step of the companionway when Captain Luce hailed him.

"Say," he said hoarsely from his rail, "my girl's gone."

"Gone!" repeated Captain Cosgrove blankly. He stared for a moment, then pulled himself together. "Is her hat gone?" he asked.

"Hat!" snorted Captain Luce. "What's that got to do with it? I tell ye she's gone herself."

He turned sharply at the sound of a footstep behind him, and saw his daughter coming slowly along the gangway.

"Oh," he said sheepishly. "I didn't know where you was. Hadn't ye better turn in, my dear?"

"Yes," said the girl. She paused by the companionway to look down the moonlighted river. Suddenly she turned to her father.

"Father," she said in a low voice, "I might as well tell you—I'm engaged."

He stared at her blankly.

"You never wanted me to go with young folks," she went on with a catch in her voice, "and I'm sure I never cared *much;* but now, since we've been on the river, you've done nothing but encourage that old widower to come around and talk to me when I didn't want to talk. Then he'd go back to you, and you'd talk it over together. Oh, I've seen through it all! I didn't at first; but when he was always talking of marrying for money, and hinting about *his* money and—his loneliness, then I saw what you both wanted. Then, to-night, when you both hinted that *he* could take me to see his old

monument, though I wasn't thinking of *anything* but just getting rid of him for a time, oh! I was wild! And Mr. Allen saw it, too; and he was kind, and he's young, and I like him better than anybody I've ever known—and so——"

She paused and looked away; for a moment her father gazed at her.

"Why, good Lord! girl, I wasn't calculatin' on Cap'n Cosgrove marryin' ye," he exclaimed; "an' he wasn't. We——" he stopped short.

"Oh, you don't know what *he* thought," she replied with decision. She turned to go.

"What about that other fellow—Will Barker? Seems to me——" He was too dumfounded to think clearly or to object to anything.

"Him!" exclaimed the girl, with scorn. "I never cared for him. I couldn't help his coming around any more than I could that old—than Cap'n Cosgrove." Then she hurried below.

Captain Luce stood still. He looked off over the land, seeing nothing; then, as a shaft of light shot across the deck, he turned. Captain Cosgrove had lighted his cabin-lamp. Walking to the rail, Captain Luce stepped across and descended into the cabin of the *Mary Ellen*. Captain Cosgrove was taking off his coat; he turned and grinned.

"I see she got back," he said dryly.

"Where's that mate of yours?" demanded Captain Luce.

"What—somebody else lost?" asked Captain Cosgrove. "I don't know where he is."

"Say, you made a nice mess of it," grumbled Captain Luce. He told the startling news, repeating dully as he finished: "You made a nice mess of it."

"What about that fellow to home, who couldn't see over his collar?" asked Captain Cosgrove. "Seems to me, if she changed once, she's likely to change again, so no harm's done."

"There wasn't nothin' in that," replied the other.

"Ye said there was," went on Captain Cosgrove, "so I took it for granted ye knew. Can't blame me if ye don't give the facts. That's all I had to work on. My the'ry was all right. Why, this proves it."

"What sort of a feller is this mate of yours?" asked Captain Luce.

"First-rate," replied his friend enthusiastically—"good boy, smart's a steel trap, and has a nice prop'ty his father left him. Why, come to look it over, I guess I've done a big thing without knowin' it."

Captain Luce looked relieved, but he could not forego a parting shot.

"My girl thought you was after her," he said, with a grin, "by the way ye talked."

"All suspicion—all suspicion," replied Captain Cosgrove lightly. "Ye can't depend on a woman seein' deep into things. They jump to conclusions too quick."

A CONQUEROR

COUNT not his life a failure, since
The world accords it little worth;
For unto those in need he gave
His ready tears, his ready mirth.

And, though it was his fate to miss
The heights he cared the most to see,
He bore it with such courage, that
He turned defeat to victory!

CHARLOTTE BECKER.



THERE was undeniable evidence in the family Bible that her name was Wilhelmina; but her father could have told you—having, indeed, been responsible for the fact—that within a week after her christening she had passed by rapid stages from Wilhelmina to Willy, and thence to Billy, where she had lived happily ever after.

Billy's happiness was of the indestructible variety. Her father, who considered himself an authority on her—though by no means an authority over her—described it as "copper-toed"; but the expression was inadequate. As well describe a perennial spring as "copper-toed."

George Marston succeeded somewhat better when he gave Billy the title which was at once accepted in the office. Marston was business-manager of *The Mountain Herald*, of which Billy's father was proprietor. So his language naturally had a journalistic flavor.

"Here comes 'The Daily Sun,'" he said one day, as he saw Billy radiantly bearing down on the office. "Morning and evening editions," he went on; "extras betweentimes, and a large Sunday supplement."

But there came a time when Billy of the many titles added another one to her list; when her brow occasionally bent beneath the cares of business; and when her intimates saluted her with: "Well, Billy, how's banking?"

As usual, her father was at the bottom of it.

"Hello, chicken!" he said somewhat absently one Saturday, as Billy daintily kicked her way through the litter of exchanges which strewed his office floor.

"Hello!" replied Billy, whose language was often dictated by the theory that imitation is the sincerest flattery. "What's the matter? Has your respected contemporary called you all the mean names you were saving up for him?"

Mr. Pryor smiled indulgently.

"Guess again," he said.

"No, I might guess right, and then you wouldn't have the fun of telling me."

"Well, it's nothing new. Just the same old skeleton in the composing-room. Same old good workmen tramping off, while we pick up a new set that has tramped off from some other fellow. If I could only keep back part of their wages, or *anything* to make them save something! It would be a sort of a string to help keep them in line."

"Get 'em, then!" said Billy cheerfully.

"Humph!"—with deep sarcasm. "*You* get 'em."

"All right"—still more cheerfully. "This is pay-day, isn't it?"

"It is."

"And's that why you're looking as if you'd found your own particular nook in purgatory, and didn't like the situation? Let me see! I suppose Barker is planning his usual week-end festivities."

"Oh, of course! Barker and Jones and Rawlins——"

"Everybody, in fact," interrupted Billy, "except the irreproachable business-manager of this highly moral concern."

She accompanied this ironical shaft with a mocking bow to Marston, who entered at that moment. Then she slipped off the table—her customary perch—and started for the door.

"I'm going to get a blank-book out of stock," she observed to her father, "and give your black sheep the chance to enjoy a little sober thrift—provided the business-office hasn't a monopoly of it."

When the door had closed after Billy, Mr. Pryor somewhat uneasily eyed the flushed face of the young man. Then he essayed diplomacy.

"It's a fine thing, my boy, to have a record like yours."

"It seems to be!" Marston remarked, with a peculiar emphasis which caused his chief to abandon further diplomatic efforts.

"Say! I don't know what the devil Billy did mean by talking that way!" he frankly declared. "I guess it was only a joke."

"Yes," said Marston, the color burning a little brighter in his cheeks; "sober thrift *is* a good deal of a joke in this particular corner of Montana."

With that, he changed the subject with unmistakable decision, and Mr. Pryor did not think of it again until he was on his way home with Billy a little later. He remembered it then as he listened to her triumphant account of the founding of "the Billy Bank."

No wonder she was triumphant! As her proud parent looked at the list of names, with the amount of the deposits set opposite, he had even harder work than usual—which is saying a good deal—to refrain from telling her that she certainly was the most remarkable, as well as the prettiest, girl west of the Rocky Mountains. But Marston's flushed face came before him, and he tempered his praise by demanding severely—that is, comparatively severely:

"See here, chicken, why did you talk that way to Marston?"

"What way?"

Billy was oppressively innocent.

"Oh, about his being sober—and thrifty—and all that?"

"Why? Isn't he?"

"Yes, of course; but——" Mr. Pryor gave a sidelong glance at his daughter's face.

"Does he add an unconquerable modesty to his other admirable traits?" she demanded.

"Oh, come now, Billy! You talk as if Marston was a prig. Anybody'd think you'd like him better if he *wasn't* sober and thrifty."

"Sober thrift isn't everything in a man!" she flared forth, somewhat hotly, and ran up the steps ahead of him.

"Well, it comes pretty near being everything in a business-manager," mused Mr. Pryor, with a satisfaction which obscured his interest in his daughter's view of the matter.

Meantime the business-manager himself was not so fortunate. Try as he might, he could find nothing that successfully obscured *his* interest in Billy's view of his character; nothing that eased the thrust of that ironical shaft she had winged at his "irreproachable, sober thrift."

Marston knew himself to be far from irreproachable, but it had not occurred to him to plume himself on his shortcomings. As for sobriety, he had arrived at that safe harbor only after more or less of the tempestuous sailing to which voyagers on the life of a Montana mining city are liable; and perhaps he was somewhat proud of the achievement.

It was the mocking reference to his thrift that had cut him. Thrift, when pronounced in a certain tone, is not an altogether pleasant word in any man's ears. When the man happens to live in an atmosphere where small economies are despised, in the midst of a society which has forgotten the very existence of pennies, and which would scorn to look after its pounds by any particular attention even to shillings, such a man would choose to be called by almost any other adjective in the dictionary than that peculiarly pronounced "thrifty."

Marston writhed under it. And the

harrowed condition of his mind was further aggravated by something which savored of poetic *in*justice. If he had, indeed, worked hard—and he had!—if he had forsworn undue gaiety—and he had!—if he had cherished a growing balance at the bank—and he had, oh, so ardently!—it was Billy herself who was responsible. Of course she did not know that the reason he had slaved and saved was that he might have something more than his love to offer her. She did not know that it was the thought of her which had robbed the old pleasure-seeking of any lingering charm. Still, as that was actually the case, it did seem pretty hard that his only encouragement should be a reference poisoned with sarcasm.

Marston was not exactly pining for conclusions on the matter, but the circumstances seemed to insist that he draw one. He didn't want it, but there it was—the conclusion that Billy had divined his feeling for her, and had taken this opportunity of giving him to understand that he and his sober thrift did not appeal to her.

The week following the organization of Billy's bank was not, therefore, a cheerful one for Marston. In fact, it was only his loyalty to Mr. Pryor which saved *The Mountain Herald* the necessity of skirmishing for a new business-manager. In the effete quarters, where a dozen dogs lie in wait for every scrap, a man thinks several times twice before he gives up his own particular bone; but out on the edge of things, where "Easy come, easy go," is a proverb bright with constant use, the personnel of an office, of an institution, even of a whole town, is subject to the most surprising changes. To "move on" is the sovereign remedy for every ill. There is a constant good-by in the air; and a still more steady stream of departure, which leaves no good-by behind.

Merely to stay there at all would have been hard enough for Marston, even if Billy had not made her customary daily visit to her father. As it was, he always saluted her with a preoccupied bow, which, he fondly believed, indicated a mind engrossed with the weighty concerns of business. Then, when she had disappeared up the stairs, he would ingloriously, and with the utmost despatch, make good his escape.

When Saturday arrived, however, and Billy came down to repeat her banking operations of the week before —which, by the way, had been signally successful in achieving the end they were designed for—Marston had to stand his ground. The day was a busy one for him—too busy to admit the possibility of flight; especially as Billy's banking was conducted on the theory that time is *not* money.

He was still at his desk, therefore, when she came from the composing-room late in the afternoon, her "bank-book" in one hand, a small bag of money in the other, and in her face the same light mockery which had made him wince the week before.

"Could you spare me a little time?" she asked.

"All you want," Marston replied, suddenly hopeful that this was an apologetic move on Billy's part. But Billy was far from apologetic.

"All I want!" she echoed, exaggerated surprise in her tone. "Oh, I see! All the *time* I want. Thank you, I'm sure. You're very generous."

Marston grew hot with a sudden impotent rage.

"Perhaps Crosby could do it better —whatever it is," he remarked stiffly, nodding toward the cashier's desk.

"Cousin Frank? No, indeed. Frank is too much like me—more of a success at subtracting money than at adding it. It's different with you."

"Yes," said Marston coldly; "your father says I've added more or less to the business, but I think he is too kind."

It was Billy's turn to color. She, into whose ears her father always poured his heterogeneous assortment of confidences, knew very well that the present business-manager of *The Mountain Herald* had phenomenally increased the profits of that paper—some of which profits she absorbed. In some confusion she laid the bag and the book on Marston's desk and asked, a trifle

stammeringly, if he would see that the two agreed. Then she departed precipitately, before Marston, already repenting of the return thrust he had given, could make any reply.

At a somewhat subsequent period they agreed that it had all been very childish; but at the time—oh, dear! one trembles to think of the fate of any one who might have dared to hint such a thing at the time! As for Marston, the more he thought of Billy's innuendo, the more it rankled in his mind. It was plain that she did not care for him. But why, in the name of all that was contrary, should she pick out for her contempt the things most people would have praised! He was conscious of having kept his nose pretty close to the grindstone of hard work, but no one else had seemed to consider that a crime. Maybe—perhaps—could it be that Billy was one of the girls who can never forgive a man for not dancing attendance on them, even if that does make the treadmill of business stand still for lack of their feet? Marston smiled a scornful smile—that is, he thought he did. If he had seen, though, the sickly twist of the mouth, which was all he produced, he would never have recognized it for "a scornful smile."

In his room that evening he glowered and gloomed by himself till his mind was as sick as his heart; and finally, in sudden rebellion against the puzzle to his understanding and the blow to his feelings, he emphatically confided to the top of the table—pounded it in, in fact—that if it was his being sober and thrifty that "she" objected to, it was profanely easy to accommodate her with something else. Whereupon, jamming his hat upon his head, "the business-manager of this highly moral concern"—to quote the sarcastic Billy—took the most direct route to the bar of the Silver Palace.

It was toward noon of the next day that Marston, vaguely wondering what had been pounding his head, turned that aching member on the pillow and responded huskily to Crosby's salutation.

"Hello!" said he, his tongue clicking in his mouth. "What you doing here?"

"Just waiting for you to come to."

"What's the matter?"

"I should say," observed Crosby, with deliberate and unctuous emphasis, "that a rounded, symmetrical, all-the-modern-improvements case of intoxication—to put it politely—is the matter."

Marston closed his eyes to shut out the amused smile on Crosby's face. The young cashier—who owed his position to the fact that he was Mr. Pryor's nephew—was as prankish as Marston had been steady. Yet they had been good chums. Marston, indeed, had not been a stranger to that pious satisfaction which a man always feels at the thought that he is steering somebody else around the pitfalls *he* has had to flounder through. The mocking ghosts of sundry moral lectures seemed to leer at him in the amused smile in Crosby's eyes.

That there was an undeniable tinge of admiration in the amusement made it all the worse to a Mentor brought low. Undeniably, Marston's outbreak of the night before had shown him to Crosby in a new light of reckless daring and abandon which was not without its effect. What he had done fitted into the setting of an overgrown mining-camp, with very different effect from that it would have had, say, in a Massachusetts village, born of Puritanism, cutting its teeth on Blue Laws, bred on economy, and achieving a good old age on sober decency. Things look very different to people six thousand feet above sea-level; and nobody knows *how* far above dead-level!

"Yes, I remember," said Marston, with a disgust born of mental and physical reaction. "Was it very bad?"

"Well," said Crosby judicially, "that depends on the point of view. I guess Sandy Harris thinks it was bad enough."

"What did I do to him?"

"Won all his money and sassed him into the bargain. At least, when I arrived on the scene, you were assuring him in the most convincing terms that if he didn't get his hair dyed you'd pull

it out, as you couldn't tell the black cards from the red, owing to the rosy reflection from his head."

"The fool-killer ought to have been around!" groaned Marston.

"Well, Sandy had kind of a notion that he'd do for a deputy in that line, but they got his gun away, and I got *you* away, and so we weathered that particular squall. But it was a wild night."

"Does Mr. Pryor know?" Marston demanded.

"Sure! He went down to the office about midnight, and little Merrick told him you'd been around awhile before and got some of your money out of the safe. Merrick was so struck with awe by your—er—your grand—air, that he couldn't talk straight; so Uncle Henry started out to find you. It was his gentle machinations which finally induced you to retire from the scene of your triumphs. Don't you remember?"

"It comes back to me now—some of it," Marston drearily replied. "Of course I'm much obliged to you for looking after me; though you might better have left Sandy to his fool-killing. Don't waste any more time on me now. I'll put in all the sleep I can. Tell Mr. Pryor I'll be down in the morning. Perhaps he'll agree with me that a new business-manager would be a much-needed ornament to the office."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Crosby. But Marston made an impatient gesture, so he merely added: "I took care of your money. It's behind the 'lost-and-found' box in the safe."

Left to himself, Marston apparently forgot that he had mentioned sleep. He was too busy thinking up new and withering names to apply to his performance of the night before. Billy's innuendos, which had been so harrowing, seemed vague and harmless now. Only one thrusting thought remained undulled by the night's experience. The conviction that she did not care for him had lost none of its keenness. On the contrary, it was the more sharply hopeless to a man who had "acted like a first-class idiot."

He had gone back now to the normal idea that good girls and bad breaks, of the present variety, were natural enemies. There was no cheating himself with the thought that she might not hear of it. There is a catholic freedom about the gossip of a Western town. And, besides, there was Billy's father, with his fatal habit of unburdening his mind to his daughter.

Altogether, the only mental process of the afternoon which was in the least cheerful was a consideration of other possible places of residence. He was determined that by another Sunday he should have that change of environment which is like a new harness—if it does gall, at least the rub is in a new spot.

Of course things did not look quite so black in the morning. One's spirits are like anything else. If they do run down-hill hard and fast, the momentum at least carries them part way up the next rise.

So Marston could smile at the office-boy's big eyes Monday morning; and when he was good-naturedly chaffed at every turn, he could reflect on the disadvantages of bearing an excellent reputation. Only to Mr. Pryor did he vouchsafe any explanation.

"I'm afraid," he said to his chief, "it was out and out deliberate. I'd rather not tell you why I did it, but it wasn't because I couldn't help it. The more shame to me, of course. But I thought you might suspect me of having one of those inconvenient, periodic, kicking-loose appetites concealed about me. I haven't. It was a hot-headed insurrection against the inevitable. Tomfoolishness, I admit. But that's what it was, and it won't happen again."

Mr. Pryor drew a sigh of relief. It is never pleasant to be mistaken in human nature; but the disappointment is keener when you sharpen it on thoughts of the trouble it is going to cost you. More than that, Mr. Pryor had a strong personal liking for his young business-manager; and, while he shared the local lenience for the particular failing in question, he had been dumfounded by the suddenness and recklessness of the outbreak. So he was only too ready to

accept Marston's explanation—such as it was—and just as *un*ready to accept the resignation which was offered along with it. In vain, however, he argued and plead. Marston was firm. And when Billy appeared as usual, that afternoon, her father's greeting was spiritless and gloomy.

"What's the matter?" demanded Billy. "You look like the Book of Lamentations."

"Do I? Then I can't be accused of concealing my feelings."

"What's the trouble?"

"Nothing that will trouble you!"—in an injured tone.

"Could you turn from Lamentations to Revelations long enough to explain yourself?"

"Yes, I could!"—with some asperity. "Marston is going to leave."

"Oh!"—after a perceptible pause. "Well, I suppose it's only natural that he should."

"If you mean—what happened Saturday night, that didn't really amount to anything."

"Oh! didn't it?"

"No. And, besides, Marston had his own reasons for it."

"Did he really, now? I suppose that's very unusual! Of course 'having reasons' changes the face of things entirely."

"Yes, it does"—doggedly.

"I wonder," mused Billy, "if poor Barker couldn't think up a reason or two before Saturday. If it makes such a difference——"

"It does, when the reasons are Marston's!"

"Well," said Billy lightly, "he undoubtedly has his own reasons for leaving, too. And since they are Mr. Marston's reasons, we poor fallible beings must respect them."

With which irritating retort Billy left the room. Marston, who had been out when she came, and who did not even know of her presence in the building, was too engrossed to notice her as she crossed the business-office a few moments later. Her voice at his elbow made him look up with a start.

"Will you please show me where you put my 'bank,' Mr. Marston? Cousin Frank isn't here."

Crosby was indeed *not* there, as Billy had very good reason to know, having herself sent him on some wild-goose errand not ten minutes earlier. Oh, guile, thy name is woman, no matter what the age, complexion, or station!

"Certainly," stammered Marston, leading the way to the cashier's enclosure. "Mr. Crosby couldn't have given it to you, anyway, for I had locked it in my own drawer."

When the drawer was opened, however, he stared into it with a bewildered expression which brought Billy to his side, to stare also. There lay the familiar "bank-book," but not a bag of money, nor anything distantly resembling one, was to be seen. Marston was resorting to that utterly absurd method of hunting which consists in shaking the leaves of books and doing other equally futile things, when a sudden recollection came to him. Closing his drawer and reaching behind the "lost-and-found" box, he drew forth the missing bag. In his confusion over the recollection of how it had come to be there, he handed it to Billy before he remembered its very material increase of bulk; that increase to which Sandy Harris had so unwillingly contributed. Billy looked up from a surprised examination of her possessions.

"Why—there's a great *deal* more than there was!"

"Is there?" said Marston feebly. "Well, you know my ruling passion for adding money," he observed, with a sickly attempt at facetiousness. But he added gravely: "I must have taken your 'bank' by mistake. I've made several mistakes lately—mistakes of different sorts. Some of them you know of, I suppose. Others you don't. The extra money in there I never want to see. Couldn't you—won't you—do something decent with it—to make up for the way it came? Can't you help somebody or something with it?"

"I might," said Billy, with a peculiar smile, "take part of it to fix up 'old Hoglan' for the winter. He's almost at his last thread."

"Is he? Get him what he needs. Anything you want to do with it!"

"You've changed your mind, then, since I asked you before?"

"Before? When did you ask me?"

"When? Why, two weeks ago!"—with a prompt precision, which seemed to prove that the event was very clear in her mind.

"You asked me—*what* did you ask me?"

"Well"—impatient of technicalities—"Cousin Frank asked you for me. It was the same thing. And you sent word that you hadn't any money to throw away in that particular direction. I know the old man *is* a reprobate"—her head very high and the suspicion of a quiver in her voice—"but he is old, too, and poor, and——"

"But—Billy, wait—let me explain!" Marston eagerly stammered.

"Oh, I know he's an old drunkard——"

Billy checked herself and, blushing furiously, gave him a look of such abject embarrassment that Marston, who knew himself to be decidedly out of the Hoglan class, could not forbear a smile.

"But let me explain," he repeated. "Crosby came to me one day and asked me if I wanted 'to help cheat the devil' —I beg your pardon—and 'try to reform old Hoglan by dressing him up.' He never so much as mentioned you. And so I did say that, in the light of previous experiences with the old man, it would be cheating myself instead of the devil. If I had dreamed that you had sent him—why, Billy, don't you know that I would give everything I have, everything I hope to have, to please you? That the reason I have tried so hard to *get* something was that I might give it to you?"

Marston bent eagerly toward her as he heard Crosby's voice on the steps outside.

"Did you really think I would refuse any request of yours?" he persisted. "Was that why you were so—so——"

"Horrid?" suggested Billy, looking up—and quickly down again, as she added: "Was it because I was horrid that you——"

Her question hung fire even as his had, but she looked up. Marston returned the look in flushed silence for a moment.

"That was no excuse for my being a fool," he said. "It was no excuse, but it was the explanation. Can you ever forgive me? Only give me a chance, and I will prove to you that it will never happen again."

"Never is a long time," sparred Billy.

"But I promise you! I give you my word of honor! I——"

Marston's eloquence degenerated into incoherence, especially as Crosby showed signs of coming in.

"Billy, I'll devote my whole life to you, if you'll only trust me with yours!"

He was very close. It confused her to have him so close.

"I—I couldn't think of leaving father alone," she murmured desperately, but with a sly gleam of mischief.

"You needn't!"—eagerly. "You can live here. You can live anywhere, provided it's on earth and with me."

"But father says you're going away."

"Oh, yes, I am—or I was. But I won't!"

Even Marston had to join Billy in a laugh. Still, he persisted in his plea that she say she "would"; and though a grammarian might have had difficulty in deciding what she was promising, it seemed quite clear to Billy's superior intelligence.

"Well," she conceded—Crosby being at hand—"you may not be able to persuade father to let you withdraw your resignation; but if you are, and if you will promise to lead a life of sober thrift——"

Marston caught his breath—and Billy's hands. The bag of money fell. The augmented deposits in the Billy bank flew in every direction. Crosby, coming in a moment later, was confronted by two excessively flushed faces, but he merely reflected—in fact, proceeded to demonstrate in his own person—that diving under furniture for stray coins produces a purple complexion. Later, he wondered how he could have been so singularly naive.

THE HUMAN INSTINCT

By JANE W. GUTHRIE



A MAN and a woman sat before a blazing fire of birch-logs, that flamed and crackled up the chimney as if it meant to challenge the subdued glow of carefully shaded lamps that illumined the room. The woman was busy folding some soft, white stuff into long strips, and the man, lounging in an easy chair, smoking, watched her delicate fingers with moody, introspective eyes.

"What do you call those things?" he asked.

"Widow's bands," she answered; and there was almost anything in her voice—weariness and disillusion, perhaps scorn, and yet a pitiful remnant of the woman who has been loved and sheltered, cherished and lifted over the rough places of life.

"How long have you worn them?" he demanded curtly.

"Five years"—with equal curtness.

"And how long are you going to keep it up?"—sharply.

"Until I die," she answered, raising her eyes levelly to his; and if there were a steely glitter in them, it matched the hint of an unalterable determination that was pictured in the set look of her lips.

The man fidgeted restlessly and muttered expressively. Then, turning about and sitting up in his chair, he seemed to throw the words at her, as if he had done so often before, but was willing to make a last try; willing to match the lion in himself against the subtle feminine of the cat in her.

"Look here, Agnes! It has been a year since I have dared to say anything to you about this. You will not allow it, you put me off; but you are going to hear what I have to say to-night, and"—he flung the ashes off his cigar with a quick gesture of impatience—"you are going to answer me, too. You have been a widow five years; I have been a widower fifteen years. In all that time you have given me a place in your friendship. I want something more. I want a woman in my inner life; I want close companionship. I want your fireside warmth. I want to hear you talk. I want to feel your presence mine. I want the intellectual friction of your mind, and I want *you*, and"—leaning forward and grasping the arms of his chair with strong, virile hands, in which there was the menace of conquest—"I am going to have you."

She laid aside her work with careful quiet as his tense phrases bombarded her ears; and then, looking at him with that ungrudging admiration that every woman feels for the man who wills to do, who wears the symbols of force and power, she said:

"Yes, you want me, perhaps, because I will not give myself to you. You like my warm, cozy nook. You like to see me well-dressed and well-housed, without considering how I have accomplished it; while the method is seared into my very soul. You like the fact that 'I have not winced nor cried aloud,' that I have accepted what life offered and made my own place, and you want to share it; but I—I have lived in these last five years through

'the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds'; things that have made me old and weary—body, soul, and spirit. I have no illusions and no enthusiasms. You could not come to me with that enchanted glamour, that quality of mystery, which makes marriage so desirable to younger people; nor would the bond be of sufficient elasticity to endure the exactions of your settled habits, the indifference that my experience has induced."

"But would you be indifferent?" inquired the man thoughtfully, as he settled back in his chair and held up his cigar in an apparently absorbed contemplation of its ashes. "I don't believe it"—with conviction. "You are so intense—you throw yourself with such energy into anything that interests you;" he smiled, as if gently, admiringly amused. "I knew you as a wife"—and he said it with a tender, retrospective look in the fire—"the sweetest woman I ever knew. I liked you immensely then; I have loved you ever since."

"You loved me," she jeered; "and yet you let me face what I did after George's death. You knew I was bewildered, upset, untrained to work, ignorant of the great hungry world that seemed like some huge monster waiting to torture without killing me. I had a vision those first years"—passing her hands across her eyes with a hurried gesture, and a note of fear in her voice—"I do not know whether I dreamed it or whether it came to me as a series of collected horrors, the result of nightmare terrors of want of money and the realization that not one human being really cared what became of me; and I had been, I thought, a very necessary person in my little world. No, every one was very kind; all of my sympathizers said: 'Just let me know if there is anything that I can do for you,' and turned their backs and went their own ways. It startled and frightened me terribly; I knew for the first time the deadening indifference of people absorbed in their own affairs, and for the first time in my life stood face to face with myself, stripped of all the accessories that go to make up the outward personality and the offerings in the social sense. I wanted to die, but I could not. I had to live, and to provide the means to do so. I had to push my way out into the big world; the kind of a world"—and the shadows that swept across her face, the tragedy of her eyes, were suggestively expressive of desolation—"that I never knew existed. I, who had always had some one to consult with, advise and direct me, learned, through deepest stress, that I was an infinitesimal portion of the great cosmos, and my doing or being, coming or going, made not one iota of difference. A most wholesome lesson, I grant you, and one well learned; but now you see why I am sufficient to myself."

The man smoked slowly, thoughtfully.

"What was the vision?" he asked curiously, after awhile.

"It was a vision"—and she shrank as if she dreaded even voicing the thought—"and I do not know whether it was what I saw or what I felt that fills me yet with an anguish of despair; though I am beginning to court tranquillity as a bar against its suggestions, since I have conquered a small portion of my world, myself included."

"Tell me about it," said the man. Standing now and looking down upon her, his arm upon the mantel-shelf, he towered above her—calm, self-reliant, strong; and the woman felt it.

"Tell me about it," he insisted; and there was a restrained note of sympathy in his voice that the woman interpreted with gratitude.

She put her arms back of her, and held her head in the rest that her hands made against the carved back of the tall, straight chair in which she sat. Her dark eyes shone with unshed tears, and the delicate tints of her face deepened, though her features seemed to sharpen to even greater refinement than usual. The man watched the lights of the fire chase each other across the burnished beauty of her soft brown hair.

"Tell me," he said, again looking down at her with shy, tender pity.

"I saw a woman alone"—and the words seemed to hurry from her—"in a vast and shuddery desert place; the sun beat down mercilessly and fiercely upon her; the glare of it was something terrifying, and the sand that shone with the light was reflected in the curious, unearthly pallor in her face. But it was not warm. There was a resistless wind that blew her about; icy cold in its stinging, whiplike cuts. It curved the sand into curious forms and hummocks, and tossed her long, dark hair about the woman's face, and split to rags the thin clothing that she wore, tearing it in pieces. Such a look of fear and despair I hope never again to witness. Perhaps the drowning look so in that last conscious effort for life. Suddenly she stood still, transfixed with new horror, for from behind one of the hummocks of sand the long, hideous bodies and fierce carnivorous heads of unspeakable animals crouched toward her——" The woman stopped, gasped a minute, as if for self-control, and her face grew ghastly white. "No," she said, in answer to a movement from the man; "let me go on. I have always wanted to put it into words. I never could before. And, oh!—the face of the woman—was mine!" She dropped her arms and bowed her head in utter abandon.

"Don't," said the man, stirred to the very roots of his being, as he moved toward her and put his hand caressingly on her hair.

"But go on, tell me how it ended."

"It never ended. I never saw any farther; but somehow I feel yet as if all those things would conquer and destroy that woman, and I fight—I fight——" She rose and walked over to a carafe and took a drink of water. Coming back, she threw out her hands with a graceful gesture, expressive of contrition, and said, with a touch of cynical bitterness:

"How very melodramatic! Please don't be frightened at my theatricals."

"No," said the man quietly; "I am not frightened. I know you. And now, will you marry me?"

"No, indeed! Why should I? You have always admired success—it has been all you cared for in life; and I am no very brilliant success. You married a woman whose money gave you your first start. She died after she had just touched your heart to love, and left you free, and you have made material wealth and power your god. I would occupy a very small place in your scheme of existence, and I am a very considerable element in my own. You say you have loved me all these years. Yes, you have told me so before; but I do not forget what death and the struggle for existence have taught me. Did you think of me, or of what I was going through? Oh!" she cried, and her hands knotted themselves together, and in her voice was a half sob, as if the sordid, uncheered effort of that time had left a scorching, indelible impress upon her consciousness, and swept out of her memory everything but the demand for self-centered exertion.

"Oh, when I think of those first three years! If you had come to me then and asked me to marry you, I should have dropped thankfully into your arms. Not now."

"Why not now?" inquired the man.

"Oh!"—wearily—"we have said it all before. Two years ago you came to me, after I had begun to feel safe and let myself be human once more. You found me here, my home just what I want"—looking at the rare books, the pretty pictures, the soft-colored walls, and harmonious backgrounds for herself. "You have watched it all grow, and, manlike, you envy me my Naboth's vineyard. It is a little box of a place"—sighing contentedly—"but it is my home, and I have earned it."

"It is the most rest-inspiring place I know, and you the most restful woman; but to-night you are all overwrought"—solicitously—"and I am to blame. But I shall not abandon my claim or my right;" and he smiled at her with gentle insistence. "Perhaps I am ungenerous," she replied, "but you made me remember. I do not often do it. It is not wholesome or wise for one who works for a living ever to look back."

"You work for a living? You don't do it! You were clever enough to use your wonderful brain to do what you liked."

"Clever enough to do what I liked! Oh!"—impatiently—"do you know that to 'use my brain' to work through what I have is to live five times as much in one year as the ordinary woman does in a lifetime? How do you know, how does any man know, how many thousand ways a woman suffers who is rudely transplanted to another plane of existence? When I took my last dollars to acquire technical working knowledge of a subject that had been with me merely a pastime, I took my life in my hands; faced sickness, if I fell ill, in a charity-ward in a hospital; a pauper's death, in case I died. I was well and strong because I did not dare to be sick. For one year I did"—disgustedly—"light housekeeping. Got my own breakfasts and luncheons; a dinner of a very light order at a restaurant. On Sunday I spent the time in putting my mind, body, and clothes in order, and got a good dinner. Sunday was my one rock ahead in the week of dreariness; and oh!"—indignantly—"how I pretended! Pretended that life was flowing smoothly; that I had all the money I wanted. That I was doing the thing that was the most joyously absorbing occupation in the world. Pretended to people, to you, to my own self. Ugh! It makes me sick to think of the lies that I told in that time."

She had become intensely excited, more so than the man had ever seen her; but he leaned down, and, putting his cool, firm hand on hers, held it tight, as if the force of his own self-control might quiet her. She looked up at him from under her half-veiled eyes with an expression in them that shook the man with a tempest of emotion. In it was appeal; that old, old appeal of the weak to the strong, of the woman to the man, of simulated strength to the real fiber of actual quality, tempered by use and custom and conquest into a sex attribute and vitalized at the springs of inheritance into the birthright of protection.

"Listen, Agnes," he counseled. "Yours has been no unusual nor of necessity embittering experience, nor should you feel it so. You have only learned what every one who really lives must find out for himself. You remember the splendid words that Lowell puts into Cromwell's mouth:

> No man is born into the world, whose work
> is not born with him;
> There is always work, and tools to work
> withal, for those who will;
> And blessed are the horny hands of toil.

The breaks were bound to come to you, if not one way, then another. You were formed for knowledge; you could not 'die and leave your errand unfulfilled.' It was written that you should live in every emotion, intellect, and passion. The half-life that some women live never could have satisfied you. You always have lived, heart, brain, and body; but now your heart is starving while you have been training your mind. You have grown bitter over the drudgery; but I offer you all the fulness of life. Will you have it?"

There was a pause, big with potentialities, rich in meaning for both of them, but it passed as the man said:

"Are you sorry that you have learned what you have?"

"Yes—and no"—slowly. "I am sorry about the I that died. I am no more the woman that I was than if I never had had that existence. I have regrets for the world I have lost—the people I have found wanting, the illusions that have disappeared, and the soft, sweet things of the sheltered existence that was once mine. I can look back at myself and remember that I, too, used to say: 'My husband does not like me to do this or that.' Such a pretty little fiction, this, that women wrap around themselves to hide the chains that they hug. And half the time the husbands have never expressed an idea on the subject. Women's pretenses make me sick! They have to play theatricals domestically half their lives to secure the things they desire. They have to watch times and seasons with the duplicity of slaves."

"Well, you liked it, didn't you?"

asked the man, as he took his chair again and puffed out a cloud of blue smoke.

"Of course I did; but my eyes have been opened since. Listen to me," she said imperatively, sitting up straight and slender, the soft black of her house-dress that she donned in the evening outlining the curves of her slender figure; the white bands at neck and wrists softening the somber dulness and setting off the delicate purity of her face.

"I married George because I loved him. We lived what I suppose was an unusually happy and companionable life. We liked the same books, people, music—had similar ideals; enjoyed the same phases and conditions of being. George was older than I, and thoroughly modern; so I, too, became a product of my era. When the money went and he died, I stared a very different life in the face. I put him completely out of my mind, and with force. I never allowed my thoughts to dwell on him. I did not dare to look at his picture, or keep any of his belongings about. I fared ahead. I thought only of myself and the struggle in which I was engaged. I made my way. I took up what had been merely an accomplishment, and, as the field was a novel one for a woman, I succeeded, because here and there men—not women—held out a helping hand with absolute disinterestedness. I have worked hard, laid by my earnings, and made successful investments, until now I am safe—as safe as any one ever is in this world, where moth and rust corrupt; and I am tired and weary, and"—softly—"George has come back into my life again. You see, I have brought out his picture, his books, his belongings, and in my thoughts there is no room for any one else now;" and the look that she gave him carried a very subtle appeal to his understanding.

"I know," he nodded; "but this is life, and George has gone completely from it. I would not question his place in your memory, but I *will* contend for the place in your life."

There was a long pause, broken only by the noise of the fire and the lashing of a wild March gale at the window; then the woman said:

"No. I have learned what every woman who struggles for her living learns—what it is to be free, and what one who keeps the unit of her own individuality can do. Marriage would be bondage to me now. I could never again enter upon that dual existence, accept the dual obligations, heaviest upon the woman, of matrimony. A year ago you offered me a sort of limited marriage, a George Meredith affair, in which I was to be free if the trial were not satisfactory. You, too, had learned the beauties of freedom; you, too, liked your own place, your bachelor quarters, your unhampered existence. I declined, just as I decline to-night. I have nothing to give; I never will have. Life has offered me much, and I have fathomed many human emotions. I have known the heights and depths, and now the years are coming to me, and I want to live upon the plains and in the even places of life. No"—sinking back with a sweet, friendly nod of her head and a winning smile—"I have nothing to give."

The man got up, kicked a log on the andirons, and watched it shiver into glowing, sputtering sparks. Then, tossing his cigar in after it, he said, with some vehemence:

"You have yourself to give. That"—snapping his fingers—"for analyses, and introspections, and emotions, and ideals, and all the rest of the vagarious lot. I want you. I want you to talk to me. I want you to read to me and with me. I want to own you. I want you, body, soul, and spirit, as a man has the woman he loves. I want you all mine; and"—his face hardened and his voice grew hoarse—"I swear I am going to have you. I listened to all your talk a year ago, and I was afraid of you—afraid of your desire for freedom, afraid of your success, your cynicism, your embitterments. I did suggest that, if you were unhappy, in five years I would free you; but I believed that we might in some way form a community of interests, and each of us enjoy the measure of freedom that we both

craved. Youth has passed beyond us; each of us has known illuminating experiences, and yet I thought"—and he smiled, half whimsically, half indulgently—"that if you did not chafe at first over being bound, we would, in the close companionship, the dear intimacies, grow together in a bond far more durable, much stronger, more finely sustained, than the youthful marriages entered into so lightly, without knowledge and minus experience in life——"

"Why," she cried, interrupting him—"why did I decline? Because I am a woman. Suppose I had taken you at your word, drifted into your arrangement of a time limit, grown to love you"—the man's somber eyes gleamed, and he began to walk up and down the room—"and *you* had tired of it, and asked to be free. I know the close human bond of real marriage, with its subtle, intangible, spiritual counterpart that makes of passion something exquisite and beautiful and glorified, 'the light that never was on land or sea;' and, having known it, I do not care to risk missing it again, or to see it crushed out by neglect. No, my illusions, beliefs, trusts, are all gone. I dare not take any risks. I am afraid to marry you. I shall never again hear 'the blue tide's low susurrus that sweeps through the Ivory Gate.' No, my friend"—throwing out her hands in a final gesture of dismissal—"I have nothing to give you."

The man's face grew tense and his eyes smoldered; his figure seemed to tower above the woman, and he caught his breath, with his lips between his teeth, as if he were on the verge of an outburst of rage, from which he restrained himself with an effort; then, after a moment's calming, meditative pause, he said quietly, but firmly, as he took his chair again:

"Agnes, I stopped and got a marriage-license to-day"—his gaze never wavered from her frightened face and startled eyes—"and you are going to put on your wraps and go with me to church, and you and I are going to be married to-night."

"Quite like Aaron Burr and Madame Jumel;" she laughed uneasily, with a frightened little attempt at lightness. "No, thank you!"

The man looked steadily and fixedly at her, with a compelling gaze, and something went out from him to her that she knew and accepted—the tribute of the man to the woman. The force, determination, and purpose of the man pitted itself against the lighter, less commanding powers of the woman. He held her constrained by the demand of his own ambition; and for a few brief seconds these two, across from each other, on either side of the fire, looked one at the other, as if they never before had met; at war with one another, combative forces of unknown potentiality.

Still they sat, and it seemed to each that an eternity of time and feeling and passion and impulse swept over them. Then, as if by mutual demand, they rose. The man leaned against the mantel-piece, and his compelling eyes did not falter from the face of the woman. The tender shadows about his mouth asked recognition, but the woman, hardened by years of unexpressed emotions, was strong, and she did not yield. The slender tip of her foot poised upon the fender; the long, lithe sweep of her body, upright, immobile, outlined in the fire's glow, pictured her complete, assured, sufficient; and her mouth, unsoftened, repeated her decision. The man watched her quietly, and the very atmosphere seemed surcharged with something electric, alive, sentient; the spirit of man and woman in that primal, world-old, endless battle for supremacy. The man, being wise, still was silent. Finally the woman said, with a quiver in her voice:

"No, my friend; I am satisfied to live alone. Tear up your marriage-license and put it in the fire. It is useless. I want my own life."

With infinite patience, still with an air of unalterable decision, he watched her; still he waited.

"But I love you," he said finally. "Does that count for nothing? And you—you are, at least, used to me. You like me. I could make you love me"—confidently. "Will you let me try?"

Then, as she jeered a bit, femininely, embarrassedly, he put his hands on her shoulders and turned her toward him.

"Look at me!" he demanded. "You said you had nothing to give! Look at me, I say! Ah!"—exultingly, as she turned her unwilling eyes upward to his. "Ah, you *lied!* You could love me—you *do* love me;" while his hands crushed upon her shoulders.

Pushing him from her with force, but facing him still; the glittering, shining eyes swimming with tears in a dead-white face; all the tried, controlled power, won in a thousand efforts for self-mastery, coming to her aid, she answered:

"Yes, I could love you, but I shall never marry you. I shall never marry the best man living. I have nothing fresh nor human to give. I have nothing, not even myself, to give you. I want my own life, my own ways, my own plan of life."

"But old age?" he queried gently. "Have you thought of its tragedies, its loneliness, its forlornities."

"Yes, yes; all of it. I have thought over it well, but freedom is the greatest thing in life to me now; nothing else is half so sweet to me. I do not think that I could ever again bear the impress of another personality dominating me."

He let her talk without interruption, as if he were willing to indulge her; and his steady, inscrutable gaze did not lift itself from her face; and then he spoke, a bit wearily, as if tired:

"You have told me so often that you have nothing to give me. Do you know that I have lost nearly everything I have? You said that success was my god. Do you know that I shall have almost to begin my work over again? Life is more than half gone for me, and I no longer have the youthful vim; but I have 'the unconquerable soul'"—throwing his head back with a lionlike movement—"and I shall win it all back—and you, too, but I shall win it *with* you;" and he smiled at her with resolute assurance. Then, with a gesture that went to the heart of the woman, who stood watching him with the dawning of a sweet sympathy, he held out his hands:

"Will you help me?" he said simply. "Will you give me your splendid pluck? Will you inspire me with your intellect, your faith, your belief in me?" His voice deepened with emotion. "Will you give me yourself?"

To the eyes of the woman listening there came the exalted gaze of the mystic; her face curved into a softened and infinitely tender expression, as if something long hidden, restrained, had struggled up through stress of repression to exact recognition; and with a movement touchingly, protectingly maternal, she leaned forward impulsively and laid her hand gently in that of the man.

SANCTUARY

NO dream vainglorious drew my heart so far
Above the highway where men come and go—
Each seeking for his own—when fair below
Lie valleys where soft, grassy pathways are.

With aching feet and bruisèd hands, O friend,
I won my place—aye, toiling wrought the way.
On this clear height I rest my life, who say
Love shall aspire to it—not condescend!

ALDIS DUNBAR.

SOCIETY AT THE OPERA



By CHARLES HENRY MELTZER



SOCIETY, in the restricted sense, is not blameless. Often it is selfish. It is apt to be frivolous. But it has uses. The fact that it is useful, without always and deliberately wishing to serve anything save its own pleasure, need not concern us much.

In the Augustan age, as we all know, the enlightened rich, of whom Mæcenas was the most admirable type, devoted time, wealth, and influence to the encouragement of the arts. The artists of that day—the painters, sculptors, bards, dancers, and actors—owed no small portion of their fame to generous patrons. So, later, in the days of Shakespeare and of Molière, and still later, in the time of Doctor Johnson and of Voltaire, the nobles let their names shed social luster upon works which were respectfully and even slavishly submitted to them.

Up to the present, setting aside a few papal dukes, we have no nobles in America. But as substitutes we have our millionaires, our multimillionaires, our Four Hundred, and, as it would seem, our Seventy-nine. These, more or less, now indirectly and now directly, bestow distinction upon certain kinds of artists whom they patronize. It was but the other day we learned that a group of intelligent persons said to be prominent in society were to provide funds for the endowment of an artistic theater. Occasionally, but only occasionally, we learn that some Fifth Avenue Crœsus has invested a small fortune in French paintings or Italian sculpture. The erection of new mansions, worthy almost of being called palaces, for the housing of our ever-increasing "captains of industry" and "barons of finance," helps to save American architects from starvation. Of all the arts, however, which society thus far has most delighted to protect here, the most favored has perhaps been music.

A quarter of a century ago the interest which New York society deigned to express in music was vouchsafed almost wholly to grand opera. To own a box at the Academy of Music; to listen to a Patti, a Nicolini, a Gerster, a Nilsson, or a Campanini; to hum over the old, hackneyed arias of the Italian repertory; to applaud a cadenza and to rhapsodize over a fine trill—these were the joys of our most cultured music-lover. The Astors and their rivals of that day—how strangely remote it now seems!—would have stared in amazement at the suggestion of an after-dinner musicale. The idea of admitting a mere singer or a "fiddler" to the intimacy of a Fifth Avenue home—except as a paid hireling—would have provoked anger. The appearance of a prima donna in the boxes, unless she had been sent for to be complimented on her artistic quality, would have been resented as an audacity, and even as an outrage. Artists, despite all that French and, in a more hesitating way, English society had done to break down old barriers, were still looked upon as impossible "Bohemians," almost as pariahs. There were, of course, exceptions, here and there. Twenty or twenty-five years ago, even on the island of Manhattan, there were salons—or, at least, drawing-rooms—in which great singers were, from time to time, received, not only as entertainers, but also as guests. But

those who admitted them to their houses as friends were themselves viewed with feelings of suspicion. And if the general attitude of the wealthy toward the gods and goddesses of the lyric art was condescending and distrustful, that of their lackeys and their butlers was contemptuous.

To the important inmates of many American servants' halls and sculleries, tenors still seem monkeys, and fiddlers are regarded about as respectfully as performing bears. Only a few weeks since, it is said, on driving into the grounds adjoining a stately country house to which they had been "commanded" for the amusement of a very exclusive gathering, a party of musicians, recruited from the orchestras of the Philharmonic Society and the Metropolitan Opera House, were warned away from the main entrance by an excited varlet, and ordered to sneak in by the back door. Lest any should infer from this that an example of rudeness and ill-breeding had been set by the employers of the aforesaid varlet, I will add that on issuing from the kitchen into the music-room, where they were awaited, our fiddlers found no lack of courtesy. Society, as we know, no longer treats distinguished artists, whether they be painters or sculptors, writers or musicians, as was once common. One operatic "star," Madame Nordica, has for the past two seasons enjoyed the privilege of a parterre box at the Metropolitan. Monsieur Scotti, the barytone, and Monsieur Caruso, the world-famous tenor, have their *grandes* and their *petites entrées* in many boxes. Before these, too, Monsieur Edouard de Reszké—to name only one of several singers—was welcomed, and welcomed as an equal, by many of the most exclusive opera box-holders. The appearance last season of Madame Nordica in Box 4, as part and parcel of the glittering "Horseshoe" set which only a few nights previously had applauded her as a stage character, caused some commotion at the time; but the excitement soon died down. The prima donna was not ostracized. And society now seems willing to be kind to her.

So, altogether, things have moved since those bad times when a hostess in a Fifth Avenue salon, without shame or blush, would hand a singer—even a great singer—a check in the presence of her guests, as a reward for his or her artistic services. If there be still a line that divides a Nordica or a Caruso from our Astors and our Vanderbilts, it is intangible and scarcely visible—until the artist has retired. Nor should we forget that some of our most wealthy club members and most gracious dames have either allied or promised to ally themselves in the bonds of matrimony with artists. Gradually, very gradually, we would thus seem to be drawing nearer to a stage of civilization in which, here as in France, great artists will, of their own right, take rank with princes.

To return to opera. Without society as its patron and supporter, grand opera—such grand opera as we have for the past fourteen years enjoyed here—could never have existed. Lacking the financial help and the mundane glamour of the box-holders, the Metropolitan Opera House would, like the Academy, have become a theatrical barn or a dry-goods store. At the outset of his career as an operatic-manager, the late Henry Abbey, who was no fool, counted on the prestige and diamonds of the then golden "Horseshoe" for success quite as much as on the voices of his rare singers. Americans, though already, in a measure, accustomed to grand opera, were less steeped in it than now; and of those who could bring themselves to expend five dollars on an orchestra stall, doubtless a majority assented to the sacrifice more for the sake of being seen, and of staring at the fortunate in the parterre boxes, than for the privilege of listening to beautiful music. The attitude of society may, on the other hand, have had even less to do with art. The Metropolitan Opera House made a convenient meeting-place. It was a center, an enlarged salon, in which to exchange gossip, receive friends, and display dresses. Music, though, of course, excellent in its way, was largely an ac-

companiment to the real "stars." Occasionally, those "stars" were considerate enough to check their babble in order to listen to the singers whom impresarios had searched high and low to provide for their pleasure. Sometimes, as many of us may recall, the chatter grew so loud—louder even than certain of the dresses—that it disturbed the orchestra, and—horrible to relate—caused hisses. But that was before dark boxes were insisted on by dead-in-earnest and dramatic managers. Now, whatever the practise may be, in theory it is thought bad form to cackle while Sembrich sings the "Mad Scene" from "Lucia," or during the developments of "Waldweben." Frankly, let us confess, society is not yet wholly reconciled to its self-abnegation. That it submits to it, however, is the essential.

Frivolous though the origin of grand opera, as an American "institution," may have been, the consequences of the frivolity proved beneficent. While it gaped enviously at the millionaires and the multimillionaires of the "Horseshoe," the great public little by little accustomed itself to music. Melodies which its ears had at first been unable to follow, became intelligible. Harmonies which in the beginning had confused and worried it, at last soothed or charmed. Fully as remarkable, too, was the effect on the box-holders of casually listening to grand opera. Strive as they would—and how hard some of them did strive!—to resist the spell, it was too strong for most. Soon even the most callous and indifferent of the Metropolitan habitués learned, possibly to their surprise, to discriminate between Wagner and Verdi, Gounod and Rossini, Mozart and Meyerbeer. While involuntarily, or at least unintentionally, providing education for the admiring public, they themselves became more broadly educated. Had you told them, when they paid for their boxes, that they were public benefactors, they would have smiled. Yet—such is the power of gold—by merely purchasing pleasure for themselves, they had acted as refining and therefore, in a sense, as moralizing influences. Music, you see, like "She," "must be obeyed." And to obey means, in the long run, to be won by the sweet art.

To a portion of the habitual "patrons" of grand opera who adorn the boxes, the intermissions, rather than the performances, are the chief reasons for the existence of the Metropolitan functions. But these comparatively untutored persons form a minority, not a majority. The darkness against which the box-holders once so vigorously protested is now accepted, more or less gracefully, as quite proper. By certain dowagers, and by some of the more hard-worked elderly gentlemen who escort them to the opera-house, it is, indeed, commended, as an auxiliary of sleep. The younger people, again, and among them might, no doubt, be numbered some of our young matrons, approved of it because it facilitated and concealed their innocent flirtations. Thus every one, including the singers, their audiences, and the opera-house manager, found something to admire in it. Moreover, strange as it may appear, it stopped gossip, or, at all events, the more shameless and objectionable kind of gossip, which was once so wittily rebuked by Berlioz. You have read the story, but it is worth quoting again. The opera they were giving, at the Paris opera-house—then in the Rue Le Peletier—on the occasion in question, was by Gluck or Weber. Berlioz, who adored both of those composers, had been annoyed, like others in the house, by the persistent chatter around him. Though by nature the reverse of patient, he endured the nuisance for a time. At last, however, losing his temper—but not his *savoir vivre*—he rose from his seat, turned to the babblers, and in his most scathingly ironic tone exclaimed loudly: "Deuce take those singers! Why *will* they prevent us from listening to the interesting conversation of these gentlemen?"

Darkness, to be sure, has, from the standpoint of society, one serious disadvantage. It prevents the box-holders, for the time being, from criticizing

one another's dresses and speculating as to the value of one another's jewels. What is the use, it may be argued, of investing in Paquin or Worth gowns, or humbling oneself to get Lalique to create new necklaces and brooches, if they are to be hidden? Reflections such as these, maybe, have had much to do with the comparative chasteness, modesty, and sobriety which, during the past season or two, have marked the apparel of the feminine opera contingent on subscription nights. The diamonds on which society reporters love to expend their adjectives are far less common than they were ten years ago. And this despite the fact that most of the box-holders are monstrously richer. For art induces taste, as well as other things.

But—there is always a "but"—before dismissing this not unimportant point, may we not ask ourselves why some of the most popular New York women in that wonderful "Horseshoe" so painfully and so recklessly forget that the dresses in which they array themselves on grand opera nights have red backgrounds? To do justice to their own charms, surely they should avoid hues like mauve, or violet, or like the distressing greens which, for unfathomable reasons, are so much affected in the Metropolitan boxes? Cream white, pale rose, light blue, some shades of yellow—these, above all, look well against the red. And, it may be added, these are now most frequent.

The possession of a box, even a parterre box, at the Metropolitan Opera House, does not, of itself, stamp one as a member of society. But, as one title among many usually demanded of "new" would-be social lights, it is an advantage. The cost of acquiring one of these coveted little cozy-corners, originally thirty-five thousand dollars, is now said to be between eighty and one hundred thousand. Nor, even at this somewhat alarming price, would many, if any, of those owning boxes consent to part with them. Happily for some who would otherwise knock vainly for admission to the "Horseshoe," it is not impossible to make arrangements with the owners of parterre boxes for their use on certain nights. Few of the celebrities who frequent the opera-house are so absolutely and fanatically musical as to monopolize their seats at all the performances. Among the most regular attendants, when in town, are Mrs. Astor and her daughter-in-law, Mrs. John Jacob Astor, who alternately throne it in Box 7. Before a recent bereavement compelled her to withdraw for a time from social prominence, Mrs. Vanderbilt, who owns Box 31, was also fairly constant to grand opera. Mrs. Ogden Goelet, though not flagrantly musical, shows herself at most performances—unless she is in France—in Box 1. Mr. and Mrs. E. Francis Hyde and his wife, who, on the contrary, are passionately devoted to the divine art, rarely miss the Wednesdays. The E. Francis Hydes, who divide Box 33 with the Thomas Hitchcocks, Mrs. Frederick Pearson, and the J. J. Wysongs, probably know more and have thought more about music than any one else in society. They have met and delighted in the friendship of great composers, notably of Wagner. Another eminently musical opera-goer is Miss Ann Morgan, who, as she convinced the conductor, Mengelberg, only a few weeks ago, when he was presented to her at a Philharmonic function in Carnegie Hall, can talk both cleverly and learnedly of German music-drama. One of the most liberal, not to say lavish, supporters of grand opera is Mr. James Stillman, who seems to find music a refreshing relief from the responsibilities of presiding over the destinies of a great bank. Mr. "Harry" P. Whitney—Box 30—is, if not actually a musician, at least a friend of musicians, and more particularly of Mr. Joseph Hofmann, the erewhile boy prodigy. Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Pulitzer, who now share Box 4 with Mr. August Belmont, have had special reasons, since the well-known editor's sight began to fail, for cultivating opera, as they do, with intelligent zeal. Miss Breese, who on Mondays and Fridays occupies Box 43; Miss Clover Boldt, who, as a rule, may

be seen on Wednesdays in Box 50; Mrs. Charles H. Ditson, wife of the wealthy publisher and part tenant of one of the stall-boxes; Miss Leary, one of the many opera-goers, who alternate in Box 2, and others who might be named, are truly, frankly, warmly, and unblushingly musical. Miss Boldt, by the by, does not confine her enthusiasm to a single art. She takes an active and an altruistic interest not only in music, but in painting. Several of the most promising girls at the Art Students' League school owe their artistic education to this excellent young lady. Miss Callender, Miss de Forest, Mrs. Victor Sorchen, Mrs. Winthrop Chanler, and Miss Bliss also have much more than a casual acquaintance with the scores of the masterpieces to which they listen at the Metropolitan. Mrs. Winthrop Chanler has this winter been enjoying more or less grand opera "on the other side." She is greatly missed.

On the whole, and allowing for the exceptions, the "Horseshoe" is neither deeply nor distinctly musical. To the great majority of our fashionables—and among them must be numbered the most exclusive—grand opera seems less the object than the pretext of those periodic gatherings at the Metropolitan. Heaven forbid that any should deny the artistic intelligence of New York society. That would be heretical. But up till now, it must be acknowledged that, though it has patronized music generously and steadily, it has given no passionate expression to its art aspirations. Dinner is still regarded by most of the Metropolitan box-holders as too sacred a function to be trifled with, even on a Caruso night. Dressing is another function which compels respect. The habitués who reach the opera-house early enough to hear the overtures are so rare that one could count them on one's fingers. Few have heard "Faust," "Tannhäuser," or "Les Huguenots" from one end to the other. Fewer still have sat through the four parts of Wagner's stupendous "Ring." And, speaking of Wagner, it may not be without interest to state that, even after all the wonderful interpretations of his works we have heard here, he is not nearly as much liked by the box-holders as by the stalls, the balcony, and the family circle at the opera-house. The power, the unchanging earnestness, the bewildering complexity, of Wagnerian music-drama appeal far less to them than the pomposities of Meyerbeer, the sweet suavities of Gounod and Massenet, the variety of Ponchielli, or the modernity of Puccini. Wagner, you see, either takes one by the heart and grips one mercilessly, or bores one to death. And society, as a matter of principle, objects as strenuously to being bored as to being deeply interested. Gounod, in "Romeo et Juliette"; Puccini, in parts of "La Bohème"; Meyerbeer, in the ballet episodes and in the love scene of "Les Huguenots"; Massenet, in his exquisite and dainty "Manon"; Ponchielli, in the arias, the concerted numbers, and the "Danza delle Ore" of "La Gioconda," suit the "Horseshoe" to a "T." Society, while ready enough to smile at the revelry in "La Bohème," or to grow sentimental in a mild way over the sorrows of *Juliet* and *Marguerite*, cares but little for the adventures or the misadventures of Over-men like *Siegfried* and *Parsifal*, for the wanderings of *Wotan*, or for the politics of Walhalla. The only things it really does quite like in Wagner are the long *entr'actes*, which break up his wearing music-dramas.

On subscription nights, the approaches to the huge Metropolitan Opera House are in a commotion. Carriages and automobiles roll up to the various entrances, discharge their befurred and bemantled human burdens, and roll off again. Mounted policemen, aided by their friends on foot, clear passages for the arrivals. As the beauties and the millionaires of the great "Horseshoe" step carefully into the lobbies, glimpses are caught of jewels rare enough for kings' ransoms, and of costumes which have cost small fortunes. Night after night, during these accompaniments of the functions at the Metropolitan, the sidewalks in the adjoining streets are thronged with people, most of them too poor to buy

even standing-room. The contrast between these onlookers and the rich box-holders is piquant. But, thank Heaven! it is less violent in our American metropolis than in the Old-World cities. Though the externals at least which distinguish the immensely rich from those who are not rich here are sufficiently marked, the differences are not harrowing; and, as a consequence, they cause less hatred and anguish in the crowd than, say, in London, during the Covent Garden season, or in St. Petersburg, when the grand dukes, and the overdecorated generals of the Imperial Guard, dash madly along the Nevsky Prospekt in their troikas, on their way to the performance at the Imperial Opera House. Here, despite the well-nigh incredible abysses that part Fifth Avenue from Avenue A, or even from Third Avenue, the glittering spectacle afforded by the preliminaries to a Metropolitan Opera House function, are viewed by the "plebeians" with feelings of indulgence. Every one, however poverty-stricken he may be, has hopes here of some day or other becoming prosperous. Meanwhile, the fortunate who own boxes at the Metropolitan provide amusement, of a kind, for the less fortunate, who own nothing in particular. Twenty years ago, if not more recently, some of the admittedly "smart" persons, who are now conspicuous and brilliant in the grand tier, may themselves have stood outside the opera-house, wondering if the tide would turn for them, too, as it had turned for others. To remember this is to be spared much envy.

It will take twenty or thirty more years, probably, to give all but our very "smartest" and most traveled opera-goers the undefinable something which enables the less well-dressed, but distinguished-looking, frequenters of Covent Garden to appear absolutely at home in the grand opera atmosphere. Music, and the love of music, are more commonly taken for granted in Europe than in New York. Opera with us is still a comparatively new preoccupation. To London and, in a much larger degree, to Paris, Vienna, and Naples, music is an old story. Environment, no doubt, has something to do with the fine air of ease that one observes in the boxes at such theaters as the San Carlo. The gilding may be tarnished, the velvet may be faded, the jewels about the necks and arms of the Italian beauties may be less precious than those which, now and then, flash from our "Horseshoe"; but on the first night of a Puccini opera, or a new *ballet d'action*, the picture presented by the San Carlo, with its dull reds as a background to its glorious women and their picturesque male escorts, would, to a fair-minded stranger, seem much more impressive than its New York equivalent. Musically, the Neapolitan fashionables are both more responsive and more keenly critical than the average Metropolitan box-holders.

After all, if grand opera in America depended only on society, it might soon come to a standstill. The "Horseshoe," true to the traditions of all similar "institutions," is terribly conservative. Music, in its more delicate manifestations, is for the artists and the aristocrats of intellect, rather than for the mass. Yet to the great public which clings to the rails down-stairs, or climbs to the top gallery, at the Metropolitan, we must look for the prosperity and progress of grand opera. Society supplies money for the admirable performances which are given yearly on the one serious lyric stage in this wide land. It lends to them the splendor of its prestige, the attraction of its presence, and the encouragement of its "patronage." Without these—to go back for a moment to what was said at the beginning of this essay—grand opera on the magnificent scale to which New Yorkers have become accustomed would be impossible. It its place we might get opera as they have it in New Orleans, with good ensembles, a fine repertory, and cheap settings; or we might get popular opera, such as Mr. Savage and Mr. Hammerstein would provide for us—and, so far as it went, this might be valuable—but we could hope neither for grand opera nor for "stars."

BRIDGE AND SOME CROSS ROADS

BY BEATRICE HANSCOM



CHANNING looked across the breakfast-table at his wife with that vague misgiving which a woman's preoccupation at that time invariably inspires in a thinking husband. Even in six months of wedded bliss, Channing had learned this lesson.

Personally, he preferred to eat his breakfast first and worry afterward; but if Mrs. Channing elected to let her coffee get cold—and it was uncommonly good coffee, too—while she corrugated a brow that was pretty enough to deserve better treatment, Mr. Edward Channing was in love to the extent of considering that the system had its good points just because *she* used it.

The daintily trim, rounded figure, her taut and trig white shirt-waist, with its jaunty cravat; the flecks of gold in the wavy brown hair that was coiled softly on the top of her well-poised head and framed a face attractively piquant, were all guarantees of Channing's excellent judgment in so doing.

When she smiled suddenly and confidentially at Channing, the hall-mark of charm was clear enough to convince the blindest old curmudgeon living.

"Teddy," she said concentratedly, "do you like surprises?"

"H'm!" said Channing, adjusting himself promptly to an unknown exigency. "I really can't say I do. They're a good deal like firecrackers: either fizzle when you expect them to go off gaily, or singe your eyelashes when you are trying to see what ails them."

"Precisely," said Mrs. Channing gaily. "And you'd really enjoy it more to know about it, and help?"

"No comparison," said Channing firmly. "Is it manual, moral, or mental?"

"It's all of them and a trifle more," laughed Mrs. Channing. "It's a bridge party."

"Who's giving it?" demanded Channing, sitting up and taking notice. Channing was particularly fond of bridge.

"We shall," said Mrs. Channing serenely. "Next Tuesday. It's to be your birthday party."

"Bully idea!" he commented. "And our first party, too—quite an event, isn't it? How did you happen to think of it?"

"Why, of *course* I wanted to do something festive for your birthday, Teddy," said Mrs. Channing sentimentally; "and," she added practically, "everybody has entertained us over and over again since we were married, and if we don't begin soon we shall just get left out."

"Heaven forbid!" said Channing hastily. "No one ever had two better reasons for having a party," he added impressively.

"And that *art nouveau* set of plates in dull green are lovely for salad, and the rock-crystal glasses are perfectly dear for ices," she explained eagerly.

"It must have been meant," Channing averred.

"And if we can get the people we want, and Nora does as well as she can when she tries, and the wind isn't in the east, so the library fireplace won't

smoke, and it should be a nice night, I think it will be a perfect success."

"Sounds as though we had better take out an accident policy," commented Channing amusedly. "Just enough risk to be exciting, isn't there? Madam," he said sternly, "did you honestly contemplate not allowing me to share in the advance joys of our first hospitality?"

"It will be a great deal more fun to do it together, won't it?" she said eagerly.

"It will be an undiluted joy," said Channing, with conviction. "Let us up and at it at once."

"Get a piece of paper and a pencil and we'll make out the list," said Mrs. Channing gaily. "You know," she went on, "we shall have to think about the people we *must* have, and the people we want, and those who are congenial, and those who don't speak, and even numbers."

"It's too easy," said Channing buoyantly.

An hour later he was putting on his overcoat with the feeling of a man who has spent a much longer interval than that crawling through cobwebs.

"I suppose," he ventured feebly to Mrs. Channing, who was surrounded by enough scraps of white paper to suggest a stage snow-storm, "that making out the list is the worst of it?"

Mrs. Channing leaned back in her chair and looked at him in mock despair.

"Can you *think* of anything worse?" she demanded laughingly.

But if Channing couldn't then, it was because the days to come were mercifully hidden from him.

As they came and went, he began to feel competent to write a treatise on "The Difficulties of Entertaining."

First it transpired that the cook had asked a "lady friend" to go to the theater with her that evening of all evenings, and had consummated the necessary purchase of tickets for that occasion.

Mrs. Channing, by a promise to refund the money and to purchase two seats for the theater the coming week, averted this catastrophe.

"But it was only because I explained to her that it was your birthday," Mrs. Channing confided to her husband, "and she said: 'Tis not Mr. Channing should be blamed because he was borrun on the Tuesday, as you say, ma'am; and if you'll make it or-*chest*-ra chairs, I'll tell my friend it was a poor show, anyway."

"Nora is a diplomatist," Channing commented.

"And I asked that nice, near-sighted Mr. Richards, who came here just after we did," Mrs. Channing went on, "and Rob Hemingway, for the odd men, and they accepted, and I was so relieved, and then I asked the Mortons and Sybil, and Mrs. Morton said she and Sybil would be perfectly delighted, but Mr. Morton would be out of town, so there's another man's place to fill.

"And the Grays couldn't let me know until to-morrow, and you know people are simply *insulted* to be asked at the last moment"—Mrs. Channing's account of disasters seemed to Channing like the catalogue of ships—"and Mrs. Harding said they should look forward to it, but she wondered if I would mind playing her hand till she came. Mr. Harding would come promptly, but she never left the house until she had kissed the children after they had gone to sleep. Of course I said I would; and when Mrs. Arthur asked me if I could play Mr. Arthur's hand till he came, because he would get in on the seven o'clock train, and sometimes it's late, of course I had to say I'd do that, too, though I can't, *too*, but I'm awfully fond of Mrs. Arthur, and I wouldn't have her think I'd do more for Mrs. Harding than I would for her."

"Rob Hemingway has *proposed* to Sybil Morton," she announced, in what Channing had come to recognize as the catastrophe tone, the next day.

"Well," he said judicially, "everybody knew he was going to, didn't they? It can't affect *us*, can it?"

"It may *spoil* it," said Mrs. Channing, "if she refuses him. Either he

won't come or she won't, because they will feel it will be awkward for them, or they will both come and be queer, and it will be awkward for everybody else, and if they *don't,* there isn't a soul I can ask to fill the place, anyway, *now.*"

"But she's going to take him, isn't she? I thought she liked him mighty well," said Channing.

"She told Mrs. Morton she wasn't sure of herself," sighed Mrs. Channing.

"She would be if she wasn't sure of Hemingway," said Channing darkly. "Confound Hemingway! Why couldn't he have waited till next week!" Which, though unjust, was something of a relief.

"It's no use trying to get modern society together in fours," he commented whimsically. "Old Noah had difficulty getting his yachting party together in twos, I believe. He has my belated sympathy, all right."

He looked at Mrs. Channing. She was sitting exhaustedly on the big divan in the library.

"Will we ever have to do it again?" he inquired faintly.

He sagged back in his chair with a deep sense of responsibility weighing on him.

Mrs. Channing burst into a ringing laugh, gay with the comprehending gayety that sees the funny side of present tribulation. She sped across the room and perched herself comfortably on the wide arm of his chair.

"Oh, Teddy, *Teddy!*" she said buoyantly. "What fun it is to have a party!"

"They can go to Halifax, for all I care," said Channing hospitably, as he drew her down into his arms. "The only proper kind of a party is a party for two.'"

It was the eventful night.

The wind was in the east, and the library fire was a thing of joy. A course of judicious flattery had developed in the cook a keen zest in culinary accomplishment. The guests had finally been arranged in the necessary quartets. Hemingway had been placed at a table with a Miss Varick, in response to a last late phone message from Mrs. Morton. And Mrs. Channing, though it seemed a long time since she got up that morning, felt a sense of becoming satisfaction.

She went through the rooms again to see that everything was in order. The tables were all in readiness—cards, score-cards, and pencils.

She twisted a vase on the mantel a trifle more to one side, straightened up a foreign photograph, and blew an altogether imaginary speck of dust off the top of the clock.

Channing stood by the library-table, usually the central feature of the room, but now decidedly gone to the wall on account of the card-tables.

He was handling with a book-lover's fingers two little volumes very stunningly bound.

"So you really like them?" said Mrs. Channing for the fortieth time, as she stopped beside him, enjoying his delight with a sympathetic affection.

"I should say I did!" said Channing heartily.

"I *thought* of a smoking-jacket," murmured Mrs. Channing, with a vague reminiscent indecision.

"I'm glad you didn't. I shouldn't have liked it half so well," he declared firmly. "Is the party all ready?"

"Every last thing," said Mrs. Channing serenely. "And I have two of the dearest prizes you ever saw—gold and white plates in cunning white boxes, tied up with lavender ribbons and simply huge bows."

She gave a sigh of satisfaction.

"Dear, dear!" said Channing. "This will be the success of the season, after all."

And it began to seem probable.

The guests arrived with commendable promptitude. Mr. Arthur's train was obligingly on time, and the Harding children went to sleep with unusual expedition.

It was a little startling to have Hemingway come in with Mrs. Morton and Sybil; Hemingway with a certain firmness of lips and chin which Mrs. Channing thought very attractive, Sybil with a tinge of abstraction which gave the last touch of charm to her violet-eyed

loveliness, Mrs. Morton with a heightened color that plainly betokened nervousness.

"He just came in and asked if we were ready, as though he hadn't gone away furious last night because Sybil told him she had begun to think she should never marry," Mrs. Morton found a chance to murmur to Mrs. Channing. "I'm sure I don't know how Sybil felt, but I've nearly talked myself to death on the way over, trying to keep up a perfectly *easy*, natural conversation, as though I didn't know anything about it."

Mrs. Channing pressed her hand sympathetically, though her eyes and her attention roved.

"Fourteen, fifteen, and I'm sixteen," she counted. Then she gave a sigh of relief. At last the party was a complete visible entity.

"It will come out all right," she whispered to Mrs. Morton. Then she smiled at them all. "I think every one is here now. Shall we begin?"

That she and her partner should lose the first game did not disturb her serenity, but the winning lady did.

For, as she marked a peculiarly constructed star opposite that portion of her score, she said sweetly: "Don't forget to count your progressions, partner. I suppose there is a prize for progressions, Mrs. Channing?"

"Ye-es," said Mrs. Channing weakly, though her tongue seemed to cling to the roof of her mouth, and her voice came from some far-away spot. "Ye-es, of course."

For in that sickening moment she remembered that she had only provided two prizes, the prizes for points. In progressive bridge, as played in Clarion, there must be prizes for progressions as well.

"And everybody has had them," she thought frantically, as she smiled with outward serenity at the victorious couple approaching.

"Oh, yes; Mrs. Channing said there were," she heard her late antagonist assuring some one at the next table.

As the hand went on, she made a rapid mental inventory of all the detachable and possible objects in the house which might serve her purpose. It not only caused her to play with a recklessness prejudicial to the finer points of the game, but it proved entirely unavailing.

"That trump lead was a little rash, don't you think so, Mrs. Channing?" said her partner gently, as the adversaries scored triumphantly several unexpected points.

"I'm afraid it was," said Mrs. Channing meekly, conscious that when she had unseeingly played that card on the table she was thinking over the small articles of bric-à-brac on the second story. "For, of course, they'd remember seeing anything on this floor," she thought distractedly.

Her head began to feel unreasonably, and there was a lump in her throat. She wondered if she was coming down with anything, and if it would be contagious.

How would it do to give two books? But, alas, Channing had recently indulged in a new book-plate, and had gummed one firmly in every book they possessed. Except — *except* — Mrs. Channing saw hope dawn dimly in the distance—in the two volumes she had given him for a birthday present.

She thanked Heaven that she had not had time to write in them as she had intended. She thought how exultantly Channing had welcomed them, how fond he was of them already. They had been a bit of an extravagance, in their elaborately tooled leather bindings. But she hardened her heart. As husband and wife were one, so they must suffer together. It was just for such crises as these that they put "for better, for worse," in the service. It was the only way.

To her brief sensation of relief, a second anxiety succeeded. She must break the news to Channing; and before, in his pride of recent acquisition, he should feel impelled to speak of his new books, to show them to some one. She could not leave the table in the midst of a hand, and where was he?

Her anxious glance found him at the next table, enjoying himself hugely. He

was in the full swing of playing a no-trumper.

She recognized to her horror that one of his adversaries was Harding. Harding was another booklover. Channing had exulted in the thought of showing him the new treasures.

"I pass the make, Mrs. Channing," she heard her partner say. Something in the patience of his tone suggested that he might have said it before.

Looking hastily at her hand, she saw six clubs, with four honors, and, with a gleam of returning reason, announced that suit as the trump. After the opening lead, she disposed herself, with a very pretty show of attention, in an attitude which had as its ulterior motive the fact that it commanded an excellent view of Channing's face.

He was just finishing the hand.

"Mary had a little slam, her face was white as snow," she heard him saying gaily, as he proceeded to score the hand.

Mrs. Channing wondered dully how he could be so care-free. With a growing apprehension, she saw his face light up with an especial delight.

"By the way, Harding," he said genially, "I've something I want to show you. To-day happens to be my birthday, and——"

By the association of ideas, he glanced across at his wife. Her eyes flashed him a warning to stop. Channing, puzzled, could not believe he understood.

"My wife gave me——" he went on slowly, watching Mrs. Channing's face. But no one could mistake the frozen horror of her glance now. Channing saw that it was no "time to question why."

"A birthday party," he finished, and was rewarded by seeing Mrs. Channing's strenuous gaze relax. "That's why I want to show you how to play bridge," he finished lamely.

"Oh, well, a man ought to hold all the cards on his birthday, I suppose," observed Harding genially. "Go on to glory, old man. Perhaps some one will come along we *can* beat."

The shifting of tables gave Mrs. Channing her opportunity. She rose, ostensibly to adjust a lamp-shade a fraction of an inch, and caught Channing by the coat-sleeve, secure that in the general changing she could have at least a word with him.

"Something awful," Channing caught the murmur. "Forgot two prizes. Have to take your birthday books."

From the mystery of an unknown danger, to the sense of a definite loss, is in itself a sensation of relief. As for that one sharp twinge of anguish, Channing concealed it loyally.

"All right," he nodded. "But how are you going to get them out of the room?" he inquired anxiously.

"I'll manage," said Mrs. Channing. She smiled at him bravely.

As he played the next game, Channing was conscious that his attention kept wandering. He wondered how and when Mrs. Channing would get those two terribly necessary books out of the room. Happily, he had laid them down quite at the back of the library-table, where they were not visible from the card-tables. But some one might go over to the library-table at the time of progression, and then the worst would have happened. While those books remained in the room, Channing felt that they would constitute a perpetual menace.

As Mrs. Channing's game had already suffered, so Channing's mastery of bridge waned and vanished, while the hectic jollity which masked his uneasiness gave to the three others at the table the impression that he took ill-luck with a very bad grace.

It was owing in some degree to his inward preoccupation, that the other tables finished the allotted number of games first.

Channing, struggling with five tricks in one precarious heart make, saw to his horror that the victorious players at the other tables were rising from their seats and strolling around in that vague way which fills up the interval between the successive rounds.

He saw Harding sauntering over toward the library-table, with an inquiring look in his eye. Harding had an

unerring scent for tooled leather and first editions.

A cold prickle promenaded up and down Channing's spine.

Trumps were exhausted. He led the best spade out of the dummy hand.

"Wrong hand," said his opponent cheerfully, and promptly confiscated the trick.

In that same instant Channing saw his wife swerve daintily over to the library-table.

"Oh, Mr. Harding," he heard her musical contralto, "have you seen Mr. Channing's new book-plate. We think it a particularly fine piece of work."

With a diplomatic craft, she opened a first edition in which the new book-plate was enshrined, and handed it to Harding.

Harding was immediately dead to the world.

"This table is really overcrowded," said Mrs. Channing serenely, and, placing an entirely unimportant book over the two real objects of interest, she caught the three up carelessly, and the next moment had disappeared into the shelter of Channing's den.

With a sigh of relief, Channing led a losing club. The second hand took it cheaply, taking advantage of dummy's proclaimed weakness, and led her partner's suit.

They took the rest of the tricks, discarding their spades and bringing the club suit in down to the very deuce.

"Three for us on hearts," said the fourth hand complacently. "Pretty hard on you, Channing."

"It might have been worse," said Channing, with a heartfelt sincerity.

"I'm glad you think so," said his partner, with a slight acidity.

Miss Varick was a lady who always played hard for the prize, and this was her first defeat.

She was glad that you changed partners at each table.

After this, however, the Channing family cheered up visibly, and the evening sped on in a spirit of genial jollity, which made the appointed time for refreshments come surprisingly soon. Here, at least, was no hidden sorrow.

Excitement and the prospect of the or-*chest*-ra chairs had spurred the cook to a hitherto unattained height of excellence.

The salad was worthy of the *art nouveau* plates on which it was enshrined, and the rock-crystal glasses held a delicate ice as faintly rose-color as a débutante's dream of love. As for the coffee and the punch and the sandwiches and cakes and bonbons, they were all beyond praise.

While the scores were being added up, Mrs. Channing sped up-stairs with the fated books, and laid them on the bed beside the two prepared prizes. It was doubtless only a humorous twist of circumstance that caused her to discover that there wasn't another sheet of tissue-paper in the house; nor could an exhaustive search of her top drawer disclose an inch of ribbon.

A long series of disasters, however, produces both numbness of emotion and fertility of resource.

To whisk the lavish supply of paper off the two prizes and, discriminatingly dividing it, to wrap it around the four was the affair of a moment; to follow suit with the ribbon was but one more; and though, as she viewed the diminutive and hastily constructed bows which adorned the packages, and compared them with the careful creations which had crowned the two earlier packages, Mrs. Channing was moved to hysterical mirth, it would have taken the eye of a clairvoyant to discern in her attitude, as she leisurely descended the stairs with the parcels, any emotion save that of a serenely gracious hostess, prepared to bestow upon the favored of fortune some carefully considered trifles.

That Harding should have won one of the books was some small consolation to Channing. To see the way he handled it was a guarantee of its appreciation.

Channing shuddered to think that it might have been Arthur—Arthur, who, taking the other book out of the fortunate Mrs. Harding's hands, and looking at it as though it had been the product of the bargain-counter, had observed jocosely: "Well, Channing,

why didn't you pay a bit more and get the leaves cut."

Turning from such ribald desecration, Channing observed that the chorus of congratulation had now swept on to Mrs. Arthur, who had won a plate. Mrs. Arthur's cheeks were quite pink. She seldom won a prize, and porcelains were her especial hobby.

Channing recked little of plate worship, save book-plates. It was the least of his troubles who won the two fragile prizes, but Mrs. Arthur looked sympathetically at Mrs. Channing as Mr. Gerry, who had been knee-deep in a fishing story when the spoils of fortune were thrust upon him, waved his plate abstractedly to punctuate the final thrills of the narrative.

Channing's eyes wandered over to Sybil Morton. Hemingway had crossed the room to where she was standing.

"We haven't met all the evening," Channing heard her say to him gently.

"No," said Hemingway; "and it has seemed about two thousand eons."

Channing, though it seemed to him that the evening had been of unusually lengthy duration, could not help feeling that this was a rather extravagant statement.

"And neither of us has won a prize," Sybil went on, but there was a tantalizing undernote of laughter that lent the words piquancy.

"Much as ever I knew what was trump," said Hemingway dejectedly.

"There really must be something in the old adage, 'Unlucky at cards,'" murmured Sybil, and her tone was distinctly mischievous.

"What!" said Hemingway, suddenly alert and open-eyed. She raised her eyes to his for one marvelous instant, and her smile held the sweetness of surrender. Then the long brown lashes swept her faintly flushed cheek.

"I'm going to show Miss Morton those two books of yours that I'm so fond of in your den, Channing," Hemingway called to him, with a prompt and decisive diplomacy. "Don't bother to come. I know just where they are."

Channing nodded. He had not been able to hear the last of the conversation, but the expression of their faces told him that the books in question were far more valuable than any that Aldus had ever fashioned.

"*'And Love was all they taught me!'*" he quoted gaily. Then he became aware that some of his guests were saying good night.

In a few minutes the party was a thing of the past. The Channings had done with it. It is not a part of their story to relate how Mrs. Arthur proudly placed her plate in her dining-room cabinet and gazed upon its enthronement there with a visible satisfaction; how the happy Hardings congratulated each other again and again on winning "exactly what he wanted"; how Mr. Gerry, putting his hand in his pocket for his latch-key, and so unconsciously losing his grip on the plate he was carrying with nervous tension, was promptly assured by a crash on the stone steps that the dismemberment of China was at last accomplished; how Mrs. Morton was pressingly prevailed upon to let the Greys walk home with her; how Sybil and Hemingway lagged along the way, to plan and dream of the ways they should tread together, in the old, loverlike way which is always so new and so much more wonderful than any one has ever found out before.

But as the tired Channings took their upward way, quite worn out with the exigencies of their first party, Mrs. Channing stopped suddenly on the landing and took the lapel of her husband's coat firmly between her thumb and forefinger.

"Your birthday party, Teddy!" she laughed, but there was a hysterical note in her gaiety. "Has it made you feel any older?"

"It was a bully party," said Channing stoutly.

Suddenly the catastrophe-shadow dropped like a veil over Mrs. Channing's face.

Channing saw it with a recurring sense of impending evil.

"Suppose," she said solemnly—"suppose, Teddy, that I had given you the smoking-jacket!"

THE HYPOTHETICAL CASE

By PARKER L. WALTER



HE supreme court had affirmed absolutely, in a curt *per curiam*, the finding of law and facts in the case of Hegeman *vs.* Blakely *et al* by the learned master.

That was I. The bar stood up, gaped, and I was a discovered man. I knew I would appear in the reports of cases and the legal journals as the promulgator of a defined and clear method of avoiding a few ancient but uncharted reefs, and I felt I had won a rest.

Curiously enough, my balance at the bank was for once sympathetic enough to fall into my mood, and the limited took me East—not that I was in haste; but because I was in funds and it was pleasant. It had been intimated to me in august quarters that, in view of Blakely *et al*, I would in the future find the limited a part of my regular habits.

For ten days I lounged in the New York shops, differed with the Fifth Avenue tailor as to the cut of some autumn tweeds, saw the theaters in the glories of first week of new plays, and enjoyed myself as though I had found a process by which twenty-eight was made much the same as eighteen.

I had breakfasted late, and watched the ebb past the window on the Avenue with the frankness of one who knew nobody. Now I sat smoking in pure idleness in the corridor, when a page-boy passed intoning my name and room number, as though it were part of some matutinal service.

"Telephone, sir—party waiting," he explained, as I looked at the printed slip, and all in the blue, unclouded weather I stepped into the booth and asked who wanted me.

"Is that Mr. Morecombe?" It was a round, open-toned woman's voice.

"Yes."

"Don't have a seizure—it is Mrs. Cole. Hello! hello!"

When I dug my way from beneath the landslide I said feebly: "Yes, this is Morecombe."

"I thought you'd fainted. Now listen closely. I want to see you on important legal business to-day. You simply must come. I am at Wolverhampton, down on Long Island. You have twenty minutes to catch the boat at the Thirty-fourth Street ferry. That's plenty. I will meet you at the station. This is the only day I will be absolutely alone, and you will surely come, will you not?"

I could think of nothing to say but "Yes," and I hung up the receiver, mechanically filled my pockets with cigars en route to the cab, and started.

"When in the train I will smoke—and think;" and so I sank down stupidly and watched the wigwag of the horse's clipped tail. Wigwag, yes, that was the expression they used in signaling. Was the big bay trying to send

me some message from horseland that would help me to understand Mrs. Cole? She was partial to cabs, and perhaps she had confided in this steady-going fellow in an idle moment, and he was seeking to flag me in a secret code unknown even to cabby. Perhaps—— Thank Heaven, here's the ferry!

There was no one in the parlor-car smoker. So I covered two seats and took hold of my wits with both hands to steady them.

You see, when you are about to meet a woman of fifty, whose impression is that you are a selfish thief, a coward, a cur, a hanger-on to pretty women, it is well to take such stock of yourself as the occasion deserves and time will permit. There are no fixed rules for such meetings that have come under my observation.

This was Olive's mother, and Olive was a widow. That much was clear. I had not seen Mrs. Cole since the awful morning in Meurice's, more than two years ago, when she told me Olive was meant for a higher plane than I could reach. In the afternoon I sat in the gardens of the Tuileries with Olive, and from engaged and open lovers of many years' standing, we drifted in an hour's talk into the bitterest of strangers. It has at times occurred to me I was too intolerant; too quick to judge, too slow to listen.

Olive was not seven, and I was ten, when it began, and it went along through childhood, boyhood, school, college, and—on her part—the strain of foreign travel.

She was the most beautiful brunette of her year, the world said, and to this she added a heart that was as big as her understanding was broad. Her mother was her only glaring fault. Her mother's influence was Olive's Frankenstein. I have heard they lived for years on their capital, which Olive thought was income.

Two weeks after that sudden departure of mine from Paris—I left twelve hours after I arrived—Olive had married Count Metzkoff, a Russian who had met her three years before, when she was first in Europe. He had salt mines in Galicia, iron and coal in Russian provinces, and villas here and there in Europe, wherever he thought it worth while. I was told he was handsome, young, a thoroughbred, with a wonderful mother; a beauty and diplomat, a great lady among great ladies, and the man's love lasted three years and won. I did not know how long he lived.

No word came to me from mother or daughter, and I supposed they were in marble halls appropriate unto late September in Europe, Asia, or Africa. In addition, I was sore still; ugly and intractable.

Why should I not be? She had sold herself—perhaps through her mother's demands and influence, but it was a sale, nevertheless, for all its books and candles and gewgaws and—damnation! What does the old woman want, and why am I fool enough to whirl off thus at her first beck and call?

It got to be Wolverhampton in short order, and Mrs. Cole had changed for the better in looks, and there was a fat little Mrs. Norcross in the wide-seated, wicker depot wagon. She rode with us to the gate of the drive, where Mrs. Cole got out with me, without explanation, while her team took the Norcross woman home. We had cut in by a private way, it seemed, and the house was within a short distance. There were roomy rattan-chairs on the grass under the elms. It was a pretty place—a neat white house with wide porches on a knoll that overlooked a stretch of fields and other country-seats. Mrs. Cole said nothing whatever as we walked up, and only "Coffee, whisky, and soda" to the man when we came to the chairs.

Having no narcotics, no cocaine, I said to myself, I might as well take whatever is coming as comfortably as I can arrange it, and so, when I was told to add smoking to the other bad habits in the immediate foreground, I obeyed in silence.

She was a slender woman, who looked as serene and calm and beautifully dressed as at any time in the twenty years I had known her.

Without prelude she said:

"Jim, I want to talk awhile without interruption. First, I am sincerely sorry I went crazy that day in Paris. It was rankly unfair to Olive and to you. I apologize abjectly. Wait—Olive has gone to New York for the day; we have hours of time to talk it all out. I want to begin again. I have known you and liked you as a steady, manly fellow since you were nine. Your only fault was what I used to think not only a deadly sin, but actually a contagious disease—poverty. For old sake's sake—without regard to Olive, who is not concerned in this talk and does not know you are to be here—will you try to forgive me and start anew?"

She was the winningest thing in skirts when she put herself out to try, and who was I to hold on to a sour taste and some cold ashes, when she held her slim hand out to me and demanded mine with sincerely friendly eyes?

So another peace was patched together, and when she airily caught up her coffee-cup with a little wave toward me, I joined her in the ratification, and we fell into a silence that helped to work out the details in our own minds.

She evidently concluded it would be easiest for us to plunge into the practical before we took up explanations as to past or future, for she said abruptly:

"I am glad you have done so well professionally, Jim. It makes it simpler to take up the business which you are to do for me at once. I am anxious——"

She looked up angrily at the servant, who stood waiting beside her, deferentially.

"I told you——" she began, when he said nervously:

"It is the countess, madam—at the phone. Manon says it is urgent, madam."

"The countess!" she exclaimed, in genuine astonishment. "What can she want? She must be calling from New York. You will pardon me, Jim?"

She had evidently seen my sudden dismay, for she put her hand on my shoulder and said kindly: "I shall say nothing to her of you, Jim, believe me," and moved off swiftly to the house.

It had been bad for me when the man began his message, and the quick relief had shown me how thin the ice was on which our peace was builded. I drew back my chair so I could see the valley, with the roads and the woods with the autumn colorings, and began a fresh cigar contentedly. Whatever madam had in view, she had certainly made a good beginning, and was leading, apparently, to things not immediately related to her daughter.

I took a little flight into dreamland then—it was not unnatural, considering—and did not hear her footsteps on the turf until she was beside me and seated. I had been wondering how Olive looked after the long months and the changes.

She looked very well, indeed—never lovelier—in white, with orange ribbons, and a cool, self-possessed smile—in the chair a few feet away.

I was up on my feet and in arms on the instant—surprise, anger, and some fright preventing speech.

"Sit down, Mr. Morecombe," she said, with quiet dignity. "There are matters to discuss. My mother will not return at once, and it is but fair to her to tell you she had not the remotest idea I was not in New York, as she told you I was."

That let Mrs. Cole out, for Olive had been a truth-teller, whatever the Countess Metzkoff might be. Yes, it let her out, even though it let me in.

I was a limp figure in a lawn-chair, with just sense enough to be silent, and to stare steadfastly at the valley and the trees.

"It is as well," she went on evenly, "to say straight off, that by the merest chance I heard my mother call you up on the telephone. I listened until she finished her conversation, and I pretended to go to New York as I had arranged. She thought I was there when she came just now to the phone in answer to my message. She knows I am here now—I presume she knows I am with you"—there was a shade more

emphasis in her voice—"but she will not for a time join us."

Because a person says curious things sometimes, I said dully: "Did you lock her in the booth?"

"Oh, no; only in the little room where the phone is. There are no windows, but the chairs are comfortable. Besides, she understands——"

It was all said easily and with no temper or embarrassment, or thought of interference from me. It would seem that countesses, even Russian ones, have privileges denied mere American misses.

"Had you any special talk with her?" she asked.

"She apologized for what she said once," I answered lamely; "and we are to be friends, I think. It was a legal affair she was about to allude to, I believe, when she was interrupted."

"That is one of the matters I wish to consult you on," she went on smoothly, putting on an added seriousness. "When a lawyer wishes to make a statement regarding a matter without real names—one of those cases where if Mr. A. did this and Mr. B. did that—with a view to getting an opinion from a court or another lawyer without deciding the real matter itself, what is it called?"

"I suppose you mean a hypothetical case, or a case stated," I said mechanically, still undecided as to what I ought to say and do on my own behalf, for I was being swept along unfairly to a very ordinary footing of lawyer and client.

"That is it—the hypothetical case. I like that better than the other name. Now I want you to advise me as to these facts. If a contract is made between two persons, a contract which is so common that there is a regular form employed to cover it, would it be binding if, in one of the parts of this contract, the real article generally used was not at hand, but another article very similar—in fact, the same thing made of something else—was made use of?"

"That is a very hard and complicated question," I said, interested in spite of myself. "It might turn on some point entirely outside of what you have stated. Offhand and in a general way, however, I should say that if the contract was a proper one under the laws, and the parties had authority to make it, such a substitution, if known and agreed upon at the time by both sides before signing, would not be a material defect to the intent and purpose of the contract, and, if the conditions were complied with, it would be binding."

"I am so glad," she said very softly, with a note of tenderness in her voice I had heard before.

For some reason I came to myself fully, and, looking at her openly for the first time in our interview, I had difficulty in realizing we had been separated more than a day. She was her old self, save for some elegancies in the way her hair was done and fuller lines in the face and figure. What a beauty she was!

"And now there is another legal matter I wish to speak of," she said simply, not looking at me, but at the gloves she was idly twisting through her fingers. "In order that you may understand this, I shall have to tell you facts relating to myself. I was married in Paris, and as we came out after the ceremony my husband looked white and ill. In the carriage, in spite of his efforts to hide it, he shivered, and several times his teeth chattered. When we reached home his mother saw his condition, and advised him to call in a doctor, but he would not for several hours, during which time he grew rapidly worse. When the doctors came they kept him in his room, and by night it was evident he had pneumonia. He fought for four days, with all his heart and soul—an awful fight—and died on the fifth night."

It was a pitiful story, told with emotion and tenderness, by a woman with a generous, warm heart.

"He wanted so much to live—he loved me." She was silent a moment, and there were tears in her eyes, but she proceeded: "He knew when we married I did not love him—there were reasons for what I did then I cannot

enter into now. After a time his mother and the lawyers came and told me that by his will all his great property, except some Russian estates, was mine—millions of dollars' worth. I did not care. I was not well myself. His mother is a wonderful woman. She is my friend, and I love her. I went with her and with mama, and we traveled until time brought rest to us. We came back to Paris, and then I had an understanding with my mother-in-law, after many arguments. All that came to me by my husband's will is to go back to the family—everything except my clothes and one or two ornaments which I keep as mementos. The papers are all drawn and ready to be signed. I wish you to look at them—please wait; I have more to say. Mother has become rich through my Uncle David's death—not millions, you know, but enough for us, and she has settled a small income on me. Will you wait here for me a few minutes? I must go to the house and speak to mother and release her. I was very bitter, very unwomanly, when I locked her in; but she has hurt me so. I cannot understand how I did it, for I have learned to control myself nowadays."

She had arisen and looked at me with a superficial expression. I could see nothing in her eyes to indicate any feeling as to me. She was so sad and sorry, and yet so quiet and dignified, that I, who felt that I was the one aggrieved and betrayed, now appeared a mere incidental attorney. She took my silence for a promise to remain, apparently, for she was gone, perhaps, a quarter of an hour.

A brighter and happier expression illuminated her when she returned and began at once by saying: "You will look at those papers for me to-morrow?"

I told her I thought she should employ some one familiar with Russian and European forms, but she persisted that she wanted my aid, and I agreed to do what I could.

"Can we not be friends again?" she asked impulsively. "I was not all to blame in Paris that day. You would not listen, and it was so hard, and you went away and left me helpless—I was so broken down when they said at the hotel you had gone."

"You went and asked about me?" I said eagerly.

She nodded silently and said significantly: "Mother and I are friends now. She has changed greatly—not because she has money, only; there are other causes."

"Are you going back to Europe?" I managed to ask in a reasonably quiet way.

"No, we are going home to the old house for a time." She looked at me anxiously a moment and said pointedly: "Have you forgiven me?"

"I suppose so now—I had not an hour ago. I don't know exactly how I feel or where I stand," I said, with the first genuine feeling I had shown. "You are not a person to be easily forgotten."

"Nor to forget, either, Jim," she said, with a little sigh. "I mean, I hate to break old ties——"

"It's hard to believe that," I retorted, with some heat.

"You don't know all some girls have to go through," she said patiently. "You didn't half listen in Paris—you were so angry and headstrong."

"I had enough to make me so!" I exclaimed indignantly.

She cut me short with a motion of her hand, saying: "Don't go back to that! Let us forget. Be my real friend, and help me in that other matter I spoke of."

"What is it?" I asked sulkily, distressed by her manner and a curious air of finality she wore. "Am I to understand that you want me to be your lawyer and never anything else?"

"If you will promise to sit still and listen, I will answer you," she said, glancing at me frankly with an odd, half-repressed, suggestive look in her eyes that puzzled me. "Will you promise?"

"It does not appear to matter much—I might as well promise and hear all there is to say."

"Would you think me overly con-

scientious?" she asked, with some timidity.

"I can hardly answer that," I replied, with reserve of manner and tone.

She flushed a little, but went on with more feeling: "And yet I wanted to kill myself for a time, because I thought I was doing wrong."

"When you broke with me?" I asked hopefully.

"Not that exactly," she said, breathing quickly, while her eyes filled with tears. "When I married Stephen."

"What do you mean?" I demanded, utterly at a loss to see any difference in the two actions, from my point of view.

"I mean that, in all, I have been married four times," she said earnestly, with a break in her voice that became a sob. "If Stephen had lived—perhaps I would have been a bigamist."

I was too amazed and confounded to move or speak for an instant, but I felt there was something so incongruous in her statement that I tried to take her hand as I said:

"Nonsense, Olive! It's ridiculous!"

"It isn't!" she said indignantly. "I feel that way in my heart, and always did. You don't know how I've suffered."

"But—how could it be?"

"I was married to Stephen in the American embassy," she said, her face hidden in her handkerchief; "and in the Greek church and at the Mairie in Paris."

"That doesn't signify," I commented, with a laugh. "There was only one bridegroom in all three ceremonies."

"I was married before," she whispered.

"Good God!" I cried, so horrified I sank down on the grass by her chair. "Where?"

"At home—long ago."

"Where and when?"

"In our carriage-house."

"Whom did you marry? Who performed the ceremony?"

"George Dawson read the service out of the prayer-book. Oh, don't you remember, Jim?"

"Remember! Why, Olive! Do you mean when you married me?" I cried, as certain events came clearly back to me.

"Yes."

"But you were only ten, and I was not fourteen," I managed to say.

"That doesn't matter," she said with heat, lifting her flushed face. "There wasn't any true gold ring, you know, and we had to use a brass one off the nursery curtain, and I never knew if that was proper; that is why I asked you when we began to talk—and you said the substitution didn't count."

She was in such deadly earnest, so full of a burden I had never dreamed of—for I had in truth forgotten that child's play years ago; there was so much real distress in her face, that I rallied strength and sense enough to control myself and merely say:

"Was that your hypothetical case, Olive?"

"Yes."

"In view of the death of—of—Stephen," I said soberly, thinking quickly, "in the way he did, of course there is no trouble, for the marriage was not consummated, and he is dead. Did anybody—did your mother know?"

"Oh, no, nobody knew but you—and you didn't seem to remember, and Georgie Dawson is dead."

"Was that the reason you are giving back the count's property?" I asked, without thinking.

Fortunately she did not take offense; she was too oppressed to think quickly.

"Oh, no!" she said. "I wanted to do it the day they first told me, but they would not agree, and I did not dare explain—I had had such a lesson—and I wanted to be poor—only, mama could not understand until to-day."

"Did you tell her?" I gasped.

"Yes; when I let her out. Oh, Jim, tell me—was the brass ring legal?"

Think of that stupendous luck! Just try to figure what it meant to me, and what might happen if I made a mistake and destroyed the strange, romantic, whimsical fancy this splendid, honest creature had secretly cherished so long! How could I tell what she wanted? Men are selfish devils at best. I knew

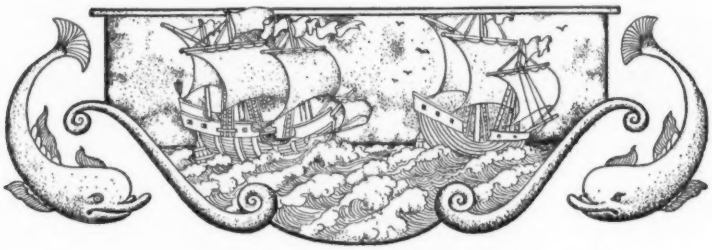
what I wanted, and I hastened to put my arms around her and say with all the solemnity I could throw into my voice: "We had better be married again, openly, sweetheart, but—the brass ring was good as gold!"

"I'm so glad!" was her delightfully unexpected comment; her arms came about my neck, and her face was hidden on my shoulder.

"I love to be mixed up in law proceedings with you, Jimmy," she exclaimed. "If my hypothetical case had not been all right, I'd have foreclosed a mortgage on you, or something, for I would be an old woman before I could learn all about another man as I have learned you, Jim—you old hothead!" and again her face was hidden.

At that instant I caught sight of Mrs. Cole not five feet away. She did not seem in the least angry or shocked. It was evidently something looked for. She moved her lips in dumb show until I read the words: "Has she told you?" and with that she held up between her fingers a big brass portière ring about three inches in diameter, with what in a less dignified person I would have called an interrogative grin. I nodded affirmatively, and she stole away.

We never talked it over. There are some things better left alone, but I think my decision in that hypothetical case cost me the confidence of my mother-in-law as to my legal soundness, for she never finished the consultation she began that morning on the lawn.



THE DREAM SEEKER

IF I could go where my soul would go—
Not anywhere tracking on land or sea,
But out, and far, where the cloud mists glow—
To float, and only my soul with me!
The beaten ways are the weary ways
Where feet have trodden in want and sin;
The path that is over the nights and days,
The road that the wings take, I would win!

Sweet are the places where children play,
The sleepless cities, the friendly towns;
But, oh, the songs of the winds that stray
Down from the cliffs and the mountain crowns!
Yea, life is good to me, love is kind:
Yet from it all I would turn my face
And leave the grace of the world behind,
To seek for the dream that makes it grace!

MADELINE BRIDGES.

MAKING A ROMAN HOLIDAY in NEW YORK



By Channing Pollock

"A Society Circus" with court of the golden fountains at the New York Hippodrome a magnificent spectacle, savage in its gorgeousness as well as refined in taste. The Hippodrome is supplanting the sort of musical comedy which offers nothing but trappings and stage management. "Mademoiselle Modiste," with Fritzi Scheff, is well worth while. "The Gingerbread Man," "Forty-five Minutes from Broadway," "The Crossing" and other midwinter productions



PENETRATING the joggle of sound as lightning stabs into darkness, the roar of an angry lion reverberated between the walls of the Hippodrome. Five thousand men and women who had been looking on lazily while stage-hands took away the reproduction of a forest suddenly sat straight in their seats, vibrant with expectation and alert in every sense. A trumpet sang out, and two minutes later a circle of bristling bars filled with a dozen tawny beasts. They yawned and stretched themselves, quivering their tails and drawing back dripping lips over glistening fangs. A woman with beautiful bare shoulders and a bull whip clutched in her right hand tripped past the iron gate and appeared, smiling and confident, among the lions. Those who saw paused a moment in delighted alarm and then applauded enthusiastically.

While Claire Heliot unfolded "the greatest animal entertainment ever conceived in any age or any country," I watched the spectators and reflected on what Gorky said about "the thin veneer of civilization." The people around me were finding unbounded pleasure in the sight presented. They leaned forward slightly in their chairs, gasping a little when one of the savage brutes before them rebelled against its trainer and struck at her with its claw-shod paw. "What a beautiful beast!" exclaimed a woman near me, but I knew and she knew that what interested her was not so much the grace of the brute as the possibility that some time—perhaps within a minute or two—the "beautiful beast" might launch itself upon its erstwhile conqueror. "Claire Heliot and Her Lions" with a protecting partition between them would not have won praise had either been a hundred times more good to look upon. The man behind me who said eagerly, "Some day they'll get her," truthfully represented the crowd of which he was one. It seemed to me, as the act ended in a tumult of plaudits, that the scene was too little different from Nero's carnivals of blood to have been separated from those entertainments by nineteen hundred years. The only real variance was in the conclusion of the show, and I couldn't help wondering whether any one except Anthony Comstock would have objected very honestly if that variance had not existed.

"The greatest animal entertainment" is not by any means the only thing barbaric and beautiful in the performance of "A Society Circus," now being given at the Hippodrome. The whole spectacle is as savage in its gorgeousness of color and design as it is refined in the taste with which the one has been

blended and the other devised. Any of the pleasure-glutted old Roman emperors would have been delighted at the ballet of pretty girls, clad brilliantly and scantily, which twists about the huge stage of the Hippodrome, and Epicurus would have been the most popular man in Athens if it had ever occurred to him to use human beings instead of stone figures as they are used in "The Court of the Golden Fountains." Whatever appeal to the primitive senses there is in crashing music and gliding colors and delicate odors is exerted marvelously in this new spectacle produced on Sixth Avenue in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and six. The Hippodrome would have put the Colosseum out of business and have caused the gladiatorial contests to be given to empty benches.

"A Society Circus" is not the less seeable because its splendor may be put down as barbaric. As a matter of fact, everybody in America who has an opportunity to do so should go to the Hippodrome. Nothing quite so ravishing and amazing has ever been shown before, the reason being that no other stage in this country could accommodate so stupendous a production, and no other auditorium gatherings large enough to pay for it. Thompson & Dundy have made the Barnum & Bailey claim to "the greatest show on earth" absolutely comic in its absurdity. They have driven the English language into bankruptcy and sent proud descriptive writers scurrying to Carlyle in search of adjectives.

Sidney Rosenfeld furnished the book of "A Society Circus." There is so little of it that one might more aptly call it a pamphlet. Mr. Rosenfeld is begun quite briskly, but whenever there is some such trifle as a vaudeville bill or a three-ringed tent show to be introduced the management has contrived to forget all about him. In the beginning we hear a great deal regarding the love of *Paul Pasky* for the *Lady Volumnia*, but soon afterward the gentleman becomes so intermittent that, when he suddenly bobbed up at a wedding, garbed in satin and lace, The Lady Who Goes to the Theater With Me mistook him for a ringmaster. Manuel Klein, the composer, is more fortunate, much of his music being conspicuously placed and jinglingly whistleable, but the real heroes of the performance are Fred Thompson, who devised the entire production; Edward Temple, who staged it, and the people who made the costumes and scenery.

The three big features at the Hippodrome are the circus, the ballet, and the spectacle called "The Court of the Golden Fountains." From the first of these portions one selects Miss Heliot, whom I have mentioned, and whose act really is the most remarkable of its kind ever shown in New York; the Powells, equestriennes; the August Family, whose juggling is familiar to patrons of vaudeville houses, and the Kaufmann troupe of bicyclists, whose work is unique and exceedingly graceful. The ballet, designated as "The Song of the Flowers," simply baffles description. It is a blond ballet, composed entirely of young women whose hair is more or less golden, and I should no more attempt to describe its beauties in a magazine article than I would contract to make a four-act comedy out of Ridpath's "History of the World." The only thing I can remember having seen that in the least resembled this dance is an active volcano on the coast of Salvador. Imagine streams of color running about a stage instead of streams of fire running down a mountain and you have a fairly good simile. "The Song of the Flowers" is a kaleidoscopic Izalco set to some charming music by Gustav Luders.

On the program which I brought home "The Court of the Golden Fountains" is set down as "the most stupendous, pretentious, and transcendingly beautiful spectacle ever portrayed." It is all that and a little more. The huge stage is sunk into a tank of water, as it was for the performance of "The Raiders," and we have revealed a lake nearly one hundred feet square. On either side of this body of water is an electric-lighted fountain, supported by young women beautifully clad and il-

luminated. A great sea-shell in the center of the lake opens wide, disclosing a score of girls in bright attire. Swans float about with collars of iridescent globes about their necks, and doves fill the air. In the background an army of gorgeously garbed men and women move here and there. A barge drifts with the stream, and brass and strings lend an accompaniment to the voices which make themselves heard above the splashing of the fountains. It is a fitting conclusion to the Roman holiday which Thompson & Dundy are making in New York.

Leaving the Hippodrome, after having witnessed the performance I have tried to describe, one's first thought is of wonder that ordinary theaters should attract anybody while so great a spectacle is to be witnessed for the same price of admission. It seems curious that pleasure-seekers should go to see ten players when they might watch five hundred, or the most exquisite production that the Shuberts or Klaw & Erlanger might stage instead of what comes from the resources of Thompson & Dundy. The question is answered by this fact: a show at the Hippodrome is *only* to be seen—not heard or felt. It is purely and simply an appeal to the eye, which revels drunkenly while the ear is starved. One doesn't laugh much at the Hippodrome and one doesn't cry at all. There can be in that immense playhouse no gratification of the desire to be told a story, which is and always must be the foundation of love for the theater. So long as we can feel the related joys and sorrows of others, smiling at a sentence and weeping at a gesture, there must be room for the simple comedy or tragedy which deals with the little emotions of our kind. "The Music Master," with David Warfield and fifteen other actors, will make more money than the Hippodrome. Nothing can rival such an institution in its own field, but that field is a landscape and not a pasture.

Indisputable as this may be, the Hippodrome has hastened the inevitable doom of that kind of musical comedy which has nothing to offer except trappings and stage management. The time has come when such a production needs two things even more than it needs girls and glitter. Those two things are a score and a book. Recent musical comedies have had all the glowing originality of a minstrel show, and have varied about as one circus differs from another. "The Gingerbread Man" and "The Babes and the Baron," produced simultaneously on Forty-second Street, were versions of one theme, and both proved to be chips off the same block that supplied "Wonderland," "The Wizard of Oz," and "Babes in Toyland." Such monotony as this would have ended the vogue of Musical Comedy, vintage 1905, even without the *coup de grâce* given by the Hippodrome. We had come to a time in the affairs of George Hobart and Harry B. Smith when there was nothing novel or attractive to offer. The animated toys had been used to distraction; we had seen a fine and exhaustive line of comic kings, shahs, rajahs, and sultans; and we had laughed over the ridiculous laws of all the outlandish nations that could be raked up by the most enthusiastic and indefatigable geographer. There remained no new ways of walking a chorus across the stage after the first verse of a song, and so little that was fresh in the songs themselves that one could never be quite sure whether he was hearing "Just My Style" or "The Tale of the Bumblebee" or "Sweet Molly O." That we are utterly weary of this sort of thing no more means the disappearance of melodic entertainment than the casting off of crinolines some years ago meant the disappearance of clothes. We got a different kind of skirt in 1865, and we shall get a different kind of comic opera in 1906.

A fair example of what we have a right to expect in this line is "Mademoiselle Modiste," a piece by Henry Blossom and Victor Herbert, in which Fritzi Scheff is singing at the Knickerbocker. The combination is a happy one for the production of an entertainment worth while. Mr. Blossom has written two or three very good plays, and evidenced tendencies toward orig-

inality and legitimacy when he provided Raymond Hitchcock with the libretto of "The Yankee Consul." Mr. Herbert is far and away the best musician we have in America. Fräulein Scheff—she is now sufficiently one of us to be called "Miss"—has enjoyed such vocal and histrionic training that she was no mean figure at the Metropolitan Opera House. Add to this trio Charles Dillingham, whose taste as a producer is modest and effective, and you have a wonderfully promising quartet.

"Mademoiselle Modiste" would be an agreeable performance if it were given without scenery or costumes. It would be a fairish comedy without music. Mr. Blossom has supplied a consistent story, amusing situations, interesting characterizations, witty dialogue, and lyrics that reach high-water mark in a delightful song well rendered by William Pruette under the title of "I Want What I Want When I Want It." There is a concerted number, sung by a chorus of waiters, which The Lady Who Goes to the Theater With Me stamped as a creditable example of opera bouffe, although, considering the occupation of the vocalists, one might as well have said opera buffet. Miss Scheff's *Fifi* is delicious. This artiste seems to me sure of as great popularity as once belonged to Lotta and might have belonged to Alice Nielsen had that young person not gone off after the laurels of Melba. Miss Scheff is youthful and pretty, she can sing, dance, and act, and she has the most alluring accent that ever toyed with an English diphthong. I saw "Mademoiselle Modiste" twice, and I'm going again as soon as managers stop giving us six new productions a week.

Anybody who prefers the Hotel Rossmore to the Holland House will like "Mademoiselle Modiste" less than the offering in which Fay Templeton is presented at the New Amsterdam. Personally, George M. Cohan's latest work seemed to me a great deal more than "Forty-five Minutes from Broadway." Charles Hoyt discovered the possibility of coupling music and farce, and the result was "A Trip to Chinatown" and "A Black Sheep." Mr. Cohan hit upon the idea of blending music and melodrama, and the two together are "Forty-five Minutes from Broadway." That the mixture does not seem equally palatable may be largely the fault of the energetic young writer, whose melodies are good but whose melodrama is hopelessly bad, and whose attempts at the risibles would only pass for wit in thick weather. Most of the means employed for provoking laughter are wholly coarse and vulgar, as when *"Kid" Burns* makes a dental toilet with a fork, or, upon looking down at a pretty girl from a platform in a tree, delivers himself of the line: "Come on up in Minnie's room."

The story of "Forty-five Minutes from Broadway" concerns *Mary Jane Jenkins,* a housemaid, whose employer, upon dying, bequeaths his fortune to her. In the absence of a will, however, the estate is claimed by *Tom Bennett,* who brings to the house which he supposes to be his a young actress whom he intends marrying, and her mother. The mother conspires with a very heavy villain named *Daniel Crontu* to rob a safe in which are evidences of his peculations, but *Mary Jane* catches him in the act and obliges mater, daughter, and heavy villain to flee. Then the will turns up in possession of *"Kid" Burns,* who loves the housemaid, and everybody lives happily forever after. The story is crude and trite, and most of it is told by *Burns* in the antiquated dramatic form known as the soliloquy. Disagreeing with that vast majority of New Yorkers who believe that Fay Templeton is a great artiste, I can only say that she gave an agreeable performance of *Mary Jane.* Victor Moore, a graduate from vaudeville, proved himself a comedian of far more than ordinary ability in the rôle of *Burns.* Klaw & Erlanger's production was excellently simple. It was a relief to see choruses in simple frocks and tailor-made gowns instead of the customary overdressing of some of their anatomy and undressing of the rest.

Certain contemporaneous musical of-

ferings may be dismissed with a word or two. "The Gingerbread Man," presented at the Liberty for two weeks in December, had everything but ginger. The book was written by the late Frederic Ranken, whose "Happyland' continues to be an example of real comic opera, and the score by A. Baldwin Sloan. For the most part, the entertainment consisted of those devices which I have classed with the crinoline, its best-liked features being a song entitled "Every Little Something" and the nether limbs of Frankie Bailey. "The Press Agent," in which Peter F. Dailey was starred at Fields', and "The Mayor of Tokio," in which Richard Carle appeared at the New York, belong in the same bracket. Both have taken to the road. "Twiddle-Twaddle," at Joe Weber's Music-Hall, contains Marie Dressler, the redoubtable Joseph himself, and about the same amount of nonsense that one expects from the musical "shows" on view at the corner of Twenty-ninth and Broadway. Whether because even Gotham loses its zest for this sort of piece or because the nonsense in this case is less bright than usual, "Twiddle-Twaddle" can hardly be set down as a success. "The Babes and the Baron," an English extravaganza on view at the Lyric, was rendered notable chiefly by the début of Fred Walton, a pantomimist whose expression was so droll and whose drollery so expressive that he speedily became a sort of sensation. Without Mr. Walton the presentation would have been hopeless, though its investiture was as brilliant as any outside the Hippodrome, and it had several amusing features.

No more extended mention than this is called for by many of the dramatic exploitations of midwinter. John Blair broke all records of the year for short engagements by bringing "The Crossing" to Daly's on January 1 and taking it away again on January 6. The worst part of this business was that it revived the hue and cry against dramatizations of novels, "The Crossing" being, of course, a version of the book of the same name by Winston Churchill. There are a great many people who seem unable to comprehend that a good story well handled makes a good play, whether the story came from life firsthand or through the medium of a bound volume. Naturally, a bad story badly handled or a good story badly handled or a bad story well handled will fail, whatever its source. "As Ye Sow," a lurid melodrama by a New England clergyman, had a bad three weeks at the Garden, and Louis Mann and Clara Lipman were reunited in a noisy play called "Julie Bonbon," at Fields'—this after the departure of "The Press Agent." To criticize any of these productions with much seriousness would be to blow up ant hills with dynamite.

Leo Ditrichstein, who wrote "Are You a Mason?" and who seems to be the only author in the country capable of turning out successful farces, was responsible for a funny piece yclept "Before and After," which Robert Hunter offered at the Manhattan. The play was well written and well acted, and enjoyed fairly liberal patronage.

One of the interesting features of recent seasons has been the appearance of one-act plays which have attracted attention altogether out of proportion to their length. Two years ago we had "At the Telephone"; last year we saw "The System of Dr. Tarr," and several little tragedies presented by Mrs. Fiske, and this year we have been asked to pass upon "The Man Who Was," "Madeline," and "Pantaloon." The first of these E. S. Willard used as a preface to "A Pair of Spectacles," at the New Amsterdam; the second Henrietta Crosman acted as a curtain-raiser to "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary," at the Garrick, and the third introduced Lionel and John just before "Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire" introduced Ethel Barrymore at the Criterion. All were ambitious, and none was particularly effective.

There is no good reason why short plays should not occupy the same position in the drama that short stories do in literature. They require equal skill and have the same advantages. "The Man Who Was" proved a weak adapta-

tion of the remarkable tale of the same name by Kipling. Not content with utilizing the incident of Austin Limmason's return to his regiment after his body and brain had been destroyed by imprisonment in Siberia, the adapter, Kinsey Piele, felt compelled to insert a love story and a villain. The result was clumsy, to say the least, and "The Man Who Was" did not evoke a particle of interest, except during the presence of Limmason. Mr. Willard's depiction of the gradual return of memory to this human wreck was an amazingly graphic bit of acting, well worth seeing and well worth recollecting.

"Madeline" was written by a woman, which is about all that one need say of it. Women's plays invariably sprawl, and this one sprawled so badly that it may be described best as a tautological tragedy. Formed and pointed, condensed into one scene instead of two, "Madeline" might be a great little drama, despite the age of the theme and its likeness to Alfred Sutro's superior playlet, "The Correct Thing." *Madeline* was an actress whose lover, *Norman Luard*—could any but a woman have selected that name?—determined, after eight years, to leave her and marry. When the time came for parting, *Madeline* locked the door of her room, and, bringing forth a revolver, announced her intention of killing the delinquent. With imperturbable courage, *Luard* asked leave to write two letters of farewell, and, granted it, turned his back and took up his pen. *Madeline* could have committed murder in her fury, but she found herself unable to do so in cold blood. So she committed suicide instead.

Obviously, the one idea in the tragedy was the incident of the letter-writing, yet the author, Mrs. W. K. Clifford, only got to that after interminable and irrelevant conversations between *Madeline* and a woman, *Luard* and a man, *and* the man *and* the woman. Only a sharp-cut, vivid play could be worth while on this subject, because the subject itself is so old and the premise so false. I can't see why dramatists assume that it is always the lover who deserts his mistress. In real life it so much oftener happens the other way. Miss Crosman's forte is not melodramatic work, but she was effective as *Madeline*, as was also Guy Standing as *Luard*.

J. M. Barrie, who wrote "Pantaloon," has introduced so much symbolism into his comedies that if he dramatized the dictionary to-morrow his cult would discover a hidden meaning in the play. The Lady Who Goes to the Theater With Me insists that *Harlequin* and *Columbine* in this last effort stand for youthful love, that the stern *Pantaloon* is necessity coming between them, and that the *Clown* who wanted to marry *Columbine* is opulence. Over in England wiseacres found a political significance in the piece, which seems to me merely eccentricity run riot. I maintain that the story of two fond young people, and of a parent who wants one of them, his daughter, to wed some one more prosperous and influential than the other, is stale, flat, and unprofitable, no matter how it is dished up. It is a dull tale under the simplest circumstances, and no less dull if it conceals the author's intention to convey the idea that Love put on Horseback gathers no Moss. John Corbin says that one either sniffs or sniffles at Barrie. Please, Mr. Corbin, may I sniffle over "Peter Pan" and sniff at "Pantaloon"?

The little company engaged in the interpretation of this tiny sketch is remarkably capable. Lionel Barrymore, last seen here as the pugilist in "The Other Girl," has the title rôle, giving what, for so young a man, is a wonderful simulation of old age. To his brother, John, falls the difficult task of making the *Clown* grotesque, and yet compelling successive audiences to understand how mean and small the man is beneath the comic white paint. John P. Kennedy and Beatrice Agnew are adequate as *Harlequin* and *Columbine*.

Miss Crosman's performance of "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary" fell victim to that peculiar species of journalistic assassination which men and women who try to do good things suf-

ter so often in New York. "Mary" was nothing more nor less than "A Scrap of Paper," and many of the critics were so elated at this important discovery that they failed to find any other fact worthy of note in the entertainment. They weren't much concerned at the undeniable verity that Miss Crosman, whose schooling has been unrivaled, proved to be as delightful in the principal part as any one has ever been, not excepting Rose Coghlan. So far as the comedy itself is concerned, there is not in town to-day another play as dainty, as clever, and as well constructed as that early masterpiece of Victorien Sardou. Its age has nothing to do with the matter. There must be thousands of theatergoers who are not familiar with "A Scrap of Paper," but they were not at the Garrick the night I saw Miss Crosman.

Miss Barrymore is one of the few little actresses who rarely attempt big things. She has established a following by giving her quaint personality free rein in such dainty comedies as "Captain Jinks" and "A Country Mouse." The rôle of *Mrs. Grey* in "Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire," which follows "Pantaloon," may not be set down as a "big thing," and yet one cannot help feeling sorry that the actress should have tried it. Miss Barrymore is under thirty, *Mrs. Grey* is supposed to be over forty, and—well, youth is much too charming a thing to masquerade as middle age, even for the sake of artistic success. You who have not witnessed "Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire," would you care to see Ethel Barrymore in a character created for Ellen Terry?

Colonel and *Mrs. Grey* have lived in India, where the army officer has been awaiting the time for his retirement. Their children, *Amy* and *Cosmo*, reside in London, and have not seen their mother and father during ten years. Just before the day of the parental return, *Amy* falls in with another sixteen-year-old girl, who initiates her into the joys of play-going. From the theater the youngsters get wild ideas about the carrying on of illicit love affairs and the fatality of a woman being found in the rooms of a man after nightfall. Impregnated with these notions, *Amy* is quick to distort a conversation between her mother and an old friend, and, applying the ethics of the drama to real life, she goes to that friend's apartments in order to forestall *Mrs. Grey*, who has expressed a similar intention. When her mother—and father—are heard on the stairs, the young woman insists on hiding, as they do in plays, so that her parents, finding her, are struck with the fear that their lonely little girl may have made an irreparable mistake. In the end, matters are explained, and *Mrs. Grey*, realizing that the time has come for her to settle into the cares and duties of motherhood, resigns herself to the family hearth.

There is much quaint and delicate humor in the piece, but the most delicious bit of it that I noted was unconscious on the part of Mr. Barrie. He so enjoys his bright satire at the expense of those dramatists who rely upon the woman-in-the-man's-rooms episode that we are laughing heartily at the device ourselves, when, lo! *Amy* is discovered in the chambers of the old friend, and we get the one genuine thrill of the evening. Yes, verily, the one dramatic moment in the play comes from the situation at which Mr. Barrie has been poking fun all evening. "Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire" is a very pleasant little comedy, on the whole, albeit rather a case of milk and water. Cream there is, too, but, as must be true in such mixtures, it is on the surface. Mr. Barrie is surprisingly undeft at times in telling the story, and all his characters talk exactly alike. I recall that, when she is apprised of the return of *Mrs. Grey*, the nursemaid in the piece poeticizes sadly: "My reign is over."

Miss Barrymore's acting is not altogether admirable. She is rather too mellow, weeps a great deal too much, and is not particularly maternal. Bruce McRae makes a fine, dignified, tender old *Colonel*, while Miss Agnew and Mary Nash are good as the romantic theatergoers. John Barrymore is convincing as the friend of the family. Cyril Smith, a lad of fifteen or sixteen,

shows such intelligence in the part of *Cosmo* that one comes to expect fine things of him when he grows up. The production was made by Charles Frohman.

The most amazing event of the theatrical season, if not of contemporary theatrical history, was the excitement which attended the introduction to New York of Thomas Dixon's negro-baiting melodrama, "The Clansman." This work, an adaptation of the author's two novels, "The Clansman" and "The Leopard's Spots," was presented at the Liberty Theater after a most astonishing campaign of newspaper publicity. Long before the piece was brought to Broadway we heard that it had stirred powerful feeling in the South, and, knowing that Mr. Dixon had written with the express purpose of making clear the inferiority of the colored race, I could understand this. However, it did not seem to me possible that New York—good-humored, tolerant, blasé New York, which permits its women to stand in the cars while darkies sit, and which never has seemed particularly absorbed in anything except money—could be induced to take even a mild interest in the wrongs which the whites suffered at the hands of the blacks forty years ago in South Carolina. That this subject could occasion columns of newspaper talk, a theater packed from pit to dome, and the wildest sort of Latin enthusiasm appeared out of the question. If it had not, every manager in the country would have been bidding for "The Clansman."

Mr. Dixon has dealt with the period of reconstruction when South Carolina was practically in the hands of a negro government. *Austin Stoneman* comes from the North with his pretty daughter, *Elsie*, to form the blacks into a league whose object is racial equality. *Ben Cameron*, eldest son of a Southern house, meets *Elsie*, and we have the time-honored theme of love across the bloody chasm. When it has been said that the story details the manner in which the whites regain dominion over the blacks by means of the Kuklux Klan, and how *Cameron* wins the hand of *Elsie Stoneman*, but small idea can have been given of the appeal to prejudice in a drama every line and incident of which is a defiance of the negro and an assertion of the divine right of his pale-skinned brother. It is a strange work to come from the pen of a clergyman—even from the pen of a clergyman who looks like Abraham Lincoln. A company which includes such well-known people as Holbrook Blinn, Joseph Wheelock, Sr., Jeffreys Lewis, Grayce Scott, and Georgia Welles does not rise above mediocrity in the interpretation of the play, its best member proving to be an obscure actor named John B. Hymer.

When this magazine reaches the news-stands the Southerners, who made up the bulk of the first night's riotous audience, and the curiosity-seekers, who must have made up many successive audiences, will have seen "The Clansman." It will then be possible to say how large a measure of success Mr. Dixon has achieved on his merits as a playwright. If the piece does succeed, I shall be justified in my contention that what the public most requires on the stage is bigness and brute force. The only thing that lifts "The Clansman" out of the rut of ordinary crude Fourteenth Street melodrama is this quality. True, that force is based on primitive prejudice, but all melodrama is founded on conflict, and Mr. Dixon merely has been clever enough to discern strong partizan feeling in a rivalry between races. Personally, I never suspected until the evening of the play's première that the people of this day and age would applaud the relegation of blacks to a plane of inferiority any more readily than they would cheer a speech in defense of the Sabine women. The fact that they did is evidence of how little New York need be scratched to reveal material for that Roman holiday.



Archibald
Lowery
Sessions

The objection to optimism in fiction, upon the ground that it gives a false idea of real life, is unreasonable. The prevalence of cheerful stories may be due partly to the fact that the public prefer them, but it is also true that they reflect that side of life which is, on the whole, predominant. New books, including "Heart's Desire," by Emerson Hough; "Heretics," by G. K. Chesterton, and "Miss Desmond," by Marie Van Vorst



IT is getting to be a very common saying nowadays among certain kinds of people that realism in fiction is only a sham realism, after all; that the demands of publishers and magazine-editors for pictures of real life as it is actually lived is neutralized by their insistence on cheerfulness and optimism; that Americans are blind about art because they instinctively turn from what is unpleasant and distressing and refuse to be interested in what is revolting and sordid. And it is intimated by those who lay claim to the power of insight into the now hidden tendencies of human life, that sooner or later there is to be a reaction from all this namby-pamby realism, and the truth will come to her own.

The disciples of this cult of gloom deprecate a diet of sugar-plums because, as they protest, life is essentially a tragedy, from the evils of which no man or woman is exempt; every human heart is in the grip of the clammy hands of sin and poverty, and it is a perversion of the facts, and therefore of art, to extenuate these dark conditions by letting in the sunlight.

Now, even if all this were true, it still leaves something to be said for the wisdom, and even for the artistic sense, of those whose business it is to publish fiction. Indeed, some sort of antidote for a condition which threatens race melancholia would be absolutely necessary, and what better one can be thought of than cheerful and entertaining stories? If the strenuous life, which has been preached so strenuously, involves all sorts of gloomy tragedies and conflicts of greed and selfishness, is there to be no relaxation from its tension, no moments of recreation in the midst of its turmoil? The attitude of these critics seems to us as unreasonable as though they were to say that there were to be no hospitals because there is disease in the world, no charity because there is poverty, no reformatories because there is crime, no attempts at adornment because there is ugliness. As a matter of fact, their quarrel is not merely with current fiction; it is a sort of semiconscious rebellion against the general tendency at the present time to make the world at large a more desirable place for human habitation, the effects of which are being extended to literature as well as religion, economics, sociology, and art. People are beginning to get a more definite idea of the value of contrasts as remedial agents, and are learning how to relieve the shadows of life by letting in the sunshine.

But "no man ever stated his griefs

as lightly as he might," and so the account given by these literary dyspeptics of actual life ought to be very substantially discounted. A sanguine temperament is not needed to emphasize the hopefulness of life. The traditional Man in the Street, if he speaks the truth, will say that his life has been sufficiently agreeable to make him wish he could live it over again; that its realities have not been so hard as to justify him in condemning it as not worth while; that in his experience he has found facts enough that are "cheerful" to vindicate whatever degree of hopefulness he may have.

Why, then, should we destroy the optimistic note in our fiction?

* * *

Pennsylvania Germans in Maryland are the people John Luther Long tells about in "Seffy," published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company. Beyond brief descriptions of one or two peculiar customs of these people, however, there is little of special color to distinguish them from any others of a similar class in different quarters of the country, except, perhaps, that a man of the type of the elder Baumgartner would be a good deal of an incongruity in a New England community.

Seffy—which, by the way, is a happy diminutive of Sephanijah—is a good-natured, simple-minded youth with whom one cannot help having a very warm sympathy. In spite of his hopeless and exasperating ignorance of the requirements of the feminine heart, Sallie Pressel's affection for him is entirely comprehensible, and even though one is inclined to share her disgust at his dulness, the reader, especially the feminine reader, will probably think that the extreme limit of patience with him had not been reached when he was dismissed. However, tears as well as smiles are necessary to a real love story; and the end justifies the device of the former as the means. The touch of pathos in the story, in the grief of Sallie and "Poppy" Baumgartner, is just sufficient to give a vitally human atmosphere to a very pretty tale.

* * *

"Heart's Desire," by Emerson Hough, Macmillan Company, is not the sort of story that one would be led to expect from its title. It is a very charming and a very interesting tale, though, in the strict sense of the phrase, it is not a love story at all. There is, to be sure, a pretty love episode involved in the narrative, but it might have been omitted without affecting the book or impairing the significance of its title.

That which gives it its peculiar charm is the human interest which binds together the group of men in the little town hidden away in the valley of "Heart's Desire," in the Western Mountains. They are a lot of grown-up children—simple, direct, unsophisticated; wholly absorbed in the interests of their uncomplicated intercourse with each other. Dan Anderson, the Easterner, the only one of them who has seen much of the outside world, has, nevertheless, adapted himself to the lives of Curly, the cow-puncher; Tom Osby, the stage-driver, and the rest.

It is only when Heart's Desire is threatened by the invasion of a new railroad that their contentment is disturbed, and they yield to the demands of civilization and surrender their illusions, much in the fashion of younger children in other places, after many vain protests.

Dan Anderson and Constance Ellsworth, the daughter of the railroad magnate, furnish the love story, but that is so unnecessary that one cannot help feeling that it was injected for other purposes than those of art.

* * *

"Hearts Haven," by Katharine Evans Blake, Bobbs-Merrill Company, is another book whose title is not altogether suggestive of the essential character of the story, which belongs to the historical type.

It has for its foundation the attempt

at communism undertaken in 1803 by George Rapp, who emigrated with his followers from Würtemberg to Pennsylvania, and afterward to New Harmony, Indiana. They were called indifferently Rappists or Harmonists, and one of their doctrines involved the prohibition of the conjugal relation. In such a community, with such a rule, it is easy to imagine what sort of complications was likely to arise; and the story of Hugh Veneno and Trillis Daventry is formulated without much difficulty and told without much effort. Their rebellion against unnatural conditions, their marriage in defiance of fanatical laws, their subsequent surrender to the mystical influence of George Rapp, are matters which called for little creative exertion, but which, nevertheless, contain possibilities for an interesting story.

That the author has succeeded in making one is due to her skill in characterization, and to the sense of proportion with which she has arranged the sequence of episodes. None of her characters, from George Rapp down, have been slighted, and the narrative is so developed as to retain the reader's interest and sympathy to the end.

* * *

"The Ballingtons," by Frances Squire, Little, Brown & Co., is a rather ponderous volume for a modern American novel, and not only because it is 445 pages long. For one thing, the author has taken her task too much to heart. Questions of ethics and problems of sociology are, of course, serious matters not to be irreverently dealt with even in story books; but a cheerful and entertaining and human discussion of them is not to be despised, even in treatises.

"The Ballingtons" is not a tale that could have been made a pleasant one under any circumstances, for it deals with the sordid side of matrimonial failure. There is plenty of episode in the book, and a multitude of characters whose comings and goings supply the side-lights; but the pith of the whole story lies in Agnes Sidney's unfortunate marriage to Ferdinand Ballington, the consequences being what might have been expected considering the man's character. His sin was that of avarice, which is one of the type which wrecks the lives of others and leaves the sinner prosperous, respected, successful—at least, in the estimation of the world. Ballington is the sort of crazy money-getter who sacrifices everything to his ruling passion, and in his case his wife is the chief offering laid upon the altar at which he knelt.

The story of her life with him is a somber and even repulsive one.

* * *

New England Puritanism, contrary to the generally accepted notion, is not wholly independent of the influence of environment, and its devotees share with other Americans the distinctly American trait of adaptability. At least, this may be fairly inferred from Marie Van Vorst's characterization of "Miss Desmond" in her book just published by Macmillan, under that title.

It may be that Miss Desmond, after the straightest sect of her class, lived a Puritan, but that fact did not prevent her from relaxing, under the influence of Parisian surroundings, the standards by which she judged others, and even surrendering one or two conventionalities, so far as her own conduct was concerned. Whether Denby traditions would have prevented her episode with Robert Bedford on the night of her niece's accident, if the emergency had arisen in Massachusetts instead of France, is a question on which opinion will be divided.

As the chaperon of her flighty niece, Molly Struthers, Miss Desmond was hopeless, in spite of her New England training, for her extraordinary beauty and her woman's instincts combined to defeat the scrupulosity which, as every one supposed, had become a second nature.

There will, however, be no disposition to censure her for yielding, under all the circumstances, to the love of "the

wickedest man she ever met"; for its consummation was delayed until both of them had had ample opportunity for reflection.

Bedford's notions of honor will probably be received by most readers with substantial qualifications. Whatever his duty was to Molly—and it must be confessed that it was, at best, fantastic—there can be no question but that to Miss Desmond, as the woman he loved and who loved him, he was under the deepest obligation. Nevertheless, the complication is necessary to the rounding out of a very interesting story.

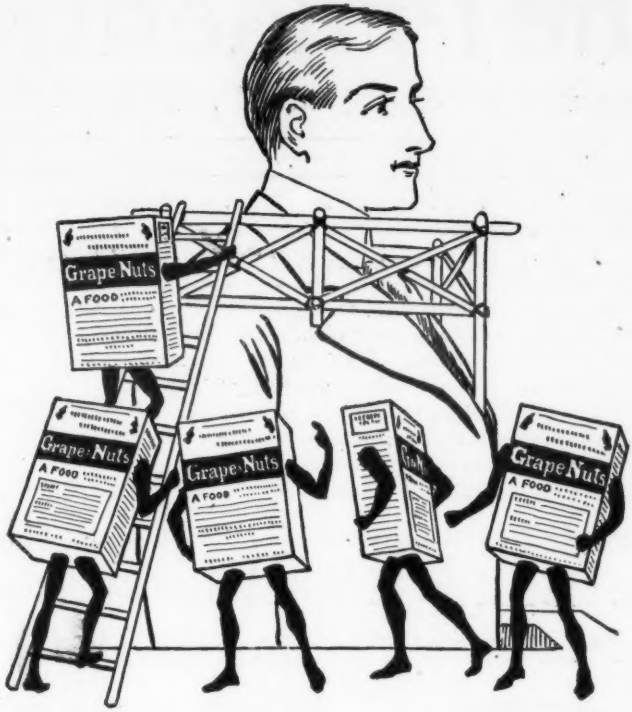
A book that has, as it seems to us, been unaccountably neglected is Gilbert K. Chesterton's "Heretics," published by the John Lane Company. It is a collection of twenty essays, designed to show, primarily, the habit of the modern man to say that "his philosophy does not matter"; that whereas in former generations the heretic denied his heresy, to-day he boasts of it. Formerly every man was a theorist; now he scorns theory and insists on being "practical"—a man who "does things."

According to Mr. Chesterton, though there have been many moonstruck and misleading ideals, "assuredly there has been no ideal in practise so moonstruck and misleading as the ideal of practicality." "There is nothing which is so weak for working purposes as this enormous importance attached to immediate victory. There is nothing that fails like success."

The book cannot be carelessly dismissed as nothing more than a collection of smart epigrams. It is true that Mr. Chesterton deals largely in paradox, but it must be remembered that the profoundest truths of life, the most significant facts of the universe, are paradoxes. It is mainly because he has grasped this fact that he has produced an immensely entertaining and profitable book, even if he has failed to outline a much-needed system of philosophy—and that is not so certain, either.

The Twenty-five Best Selling Books of the Month.

"The House of Mirth," Edith Wharton, Chas. Scribner's Sons.
"The House of a Thousand Candles," Meredith Nicholson, Bobbs-Merrill Co.
"The Man on the Box," Harold MacGrath, Bobbs-Merrill Co.
"The Conquest of Canaan," Booth Tarkington, Harper & Bros.
"The Man of the Hour," Octave Thanet, Bobbs-Merrill Co.
"Nedra," George Barr McCutcheon, Dodd, Mead & Co.
"Fair Margaret," F. Marion Crawford, Macmillan Co.
"The Masquerader," Katherine C. Thurston, Harper & Bros.
"The Social Secretary," David Graham Phillips, Bobbs-Merrill Co.
"My Friend the Chauffeur," C. N. and A. M. Williamson, McClure, Phillips & Co.
"Hearts and Masks," Harold MacGrath, Bobbs-Merrill Co.
"The Debtors," Mary E. Wilkins-Freeman, Harper & Bros.
"Rose o' the River," Kate Douglas Wiggin, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
"The Reckoning," Robert W. Chambers, D. Appleton & Co.
"Sandy," Alice Hegan Rice, Century Company.
"A Sword of the Old Frontier," Randall Parrish, A. C. McClurg & Co.
"The Gambler," Katherine C. Thurston, Harper & Bros.
"Queen Zixi of Ix," L. Frank Baum, Century Company.
"Ayesha," H. Rider Haggard, Doubleday, Page & Co.
"Rebecca Mary," Annie Hamilton Donnell, Harper & Bros.
"Pam," Bettina von Hutten, Dodd, Mead & Co.
"Songs o' Cheer," James Whitcomb Riley, Bobbs-Merrill Co.
"Ben Blair, Plainsman," Will Lillibridge, A. C. McClurg & Co.
"Her Letter," Bret Harte, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
"Sunny Side of the Street," Marshall P. Wilder, Funk & Wagnalls Co.



Re-building a Brain

Can only be done by Food which contains Phosphate of Potash and Albumen.

That is nature's way and the only way.

That is the Mission of

GRAPE-NUTS

Note the users of **Grape-Nuts.** They are brainy, nervy, clever people. Keen brains make money, fame and success.

Brains **must** be fed.

POSTUM CEREAL CO., LTD.,
Battle Creek, Mich., U. S. A.

The Prudential

Advances in Security and Public Confidence.

THIRTIETH ANNUAL STATEMENT, JANUARY 1, 1906, SHOWS

Assets, over	107 Million Dollars
Liabilities (including Reserve $88,000,000)	91 Million Dollars
Surplus, over	16 Million Dollars
Increase in Assets, over	18 Million Dollars
Paid Policyholders during 1905, over	14 Million Dollars
Total Payments to Policyholders to Dec. 31, 1905, over	107 Million Dollars
Cash Dividends and Other Concessions not Stipulated in Original Contracts and Voluntarily Given to Holders of Old Policies to Date, over	6 Million Dollars
Number of Policies in Force, nearly	6½ Million
Increase in Number of Policies in Force, over	½ Million
Net Increase in Insurance in Force, over	113 Million Dollars

Bringing Total Amount of Insurance in Force to over

One Billion One Hundred and Seventy Million Dollars.



ECONOMICAL ADMINISTRATION.

LOWER EXPENSE RATE THAN EVER BEFORE.

CAREFUL SELECTION OF RISKS.

FAVORABLE MORTALITY EXPERIENCE.

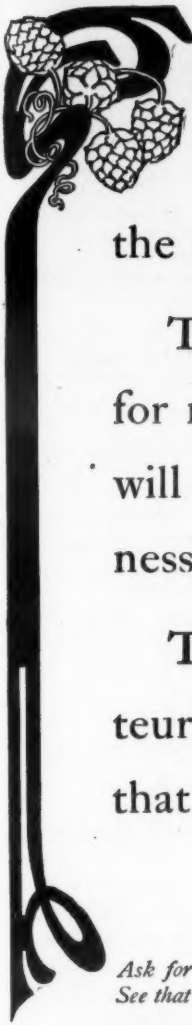
Dividends Paid to Policyholders
During 1905, Over
ONE MILLION DOLLARS

THE PRUDENTIAL INSURANCE CO.
OF AMERICA

Incorporated as a Stock Company by the State of New Jersey

JOHN F. DRYDEN, President. Home Office, Newark, N. J.

Write for Information of Policies, Dept. 90



Ask Your Doctor

about Schlitz beer. He knows the importance of purity.

Tell him that Schlitz beer is aged for months before it is marketed. He will say that it cannot cause biliousness.

Tell him that every bottle is Pasteurized after it is sealed. He will say that such beer must be germless.

Ask your doctor what these virtues mean to you.

Ask for the Brewery Bottling.
See that the cork or crown is branded

Schlitz

The Beer That Made Milwaukee Famous.



Copyright—1905, by The U. S. Playing Card Co.

There's "go" in a game with Congress Cards.

Full of life and snap—thin, supple, exquisitely smooth and sensitive to the touch—to feel the extreme fascination of a game you *must* play with

Congress Playing Cards

(Cards of quality. Gold edges.)

Backs are miniature reproductions of original paintings, artistically printed in full colors. In their *variety* they meet every individual taste.

The faces are clearly printed; the corner indexes very distinct. Perfect in manufacture and beautifully finished. Congress Cards have an irresistible "go" that, like luck, makes for fast and brilliant play. Sold by dealers.

Let us send you samples (single cards) free.

Over 100 designs to choose from—all in gold and rich colors—

Pictorial Series—Reproductions of exclusive paintings.

Initial Series—New and exclusive. All letters of the alphabet.

Club Series—For Whist, Poker, Euchre, etc. Cards of quality in set pattern designs.

Send 50 cents per pack for backs desired.
Illustrations and Single Sample Card free.

DUPLICATE WHIST—best of card games, in which skill—not luck—wins. Played with Paine's Duplicate Whist Trays—12-Tray set, $5.00; extra fine set, $10.00. 3 months' course of Whist Lessons free with each set.

Also Students' Whist Sets, 8-trays only, $1.00 per set. Sold by dealers. Send for illustrated list.

Card Games and How to Play Them, 160 pages; Entertaining with Cards, 64 pages; Whist and Duplicate Whist, 104 pages, each, paper, 15 cents. Vest Pocket Editions—Cinch or High Five, Hearts, Skat, Pinochle, Poker, Bridge, Euchre, Fan Tan, Five Hundred, each, paper, 5 cents.

Address Dept. 17 **The U. S. Playing Card Co., Cincinnati, U. S. A.**

Makers also of "Bicycle Playing Cards." Popular price—conventional designs, for everyday use. Fine dealing and wearing qualities.—Sold by dealers, or send 25 cents a pack for designs wanted. Illustrations sent free.

We send above goods, prepaid, on receipt of prices named in this advertisement if your dealer does not supply them.



DIAMONDS ON CREDIT

LOFTIS SYSTEM

YOU ASSUME NO RISKS
When Dealing With Us

We Are Ready to Send On Approval

Any Diamond, Watch or other piece of Jewelry you may select from our Catalog. Examine it carefully. If not entirely satisfactory, return it. We pay all charges and take all risks. We have absolute faith in our goods because we know they are the very best quality and Highest Grade of workmanship. **Write for Catalog Today.**

Your Credit is Good with Loftis If you are honest, it makes no difference where you live or whether you are a modest employee or wealthy employer, all we ask is honest intentions and good faith. The Loftis Credit System makes your Credit Good by adjusting the terms of payment to meet your income. It is the most popular and successful Credit System in the world because it is Prompt, Simple and Confidential. We ask

No Security—No Endorsements—No Interest

We were awarded the Gold Medal, the Highest Award, at the World's Fair, St. Louis. No stronger endorsement could be given. **Write for Our Big New Catalog Today.**

Write for Our Big New Catalog The Finest ever issued, 66 pages, 1,000 illustrations of Beautiful Diamond Rings, Pins, Brooches, etc., ranging in price from $25.00 to $500.00. High Grade Elgin and Waltham Watches, Ladies' and Gents' size, from $10.00 to $100.00, and all other kinds of Jewelry, Silverware, etc. Select any article you wish and it will be sent on approval. If entirely satisfactory retain it, paying one-fifth cash and the balance in eight equal monthly payments. Remember there is *no interest* to pay. **Write for Catalog Today.**

Our Guarantee Certificate as to quality and value given with every Diamond is the broadest and strongest ever issued by a responsible concern. We also guarantee complete satisfaction and our exchange system is the most liberal ever devised, for it permits you to return any Diamond bought and get the full amount paid in other goods or a larger Diamond. **Write for Our Big New Catalog. Write Today.**

Diamonds as an Investment are better than a savings bank because they pay four times the rate of interest. They are increasing in value from 15 to 20 per cent each year. They are better than real estate because you can realize their full value at any time at the highest market price.

Write Today For Our Big Catalog—Prices Lowest, Terms Easiest

THE OLD RELIABLE DIAMONDS ON CREDIT HOUSE

LOFTIS BROS & CO. EST'D 1858

DIAMOND CUTTERS
WATCHMAKERS • JEWELERS
Department C 29 92 to 96 State Street
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, U. S. A

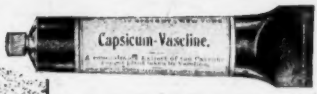
WINTER COMFORTS BASED ON VASELINE



VASELINE COLD CREAM

(In jars or tubes)

Keeps the skin in a soft and healthy condition and preserves the complexion.



CAPSICUM VASELINE

Better than the old-fashioned mustard plaster. A wonderful counter-irritant that will not blister the most delicate skin. For use in the sick room or nursery it is the safest, most modern and the *best*.



VASELINE CAMPHOR ICE

Superior to anything in use for chapped hands and lips and to allay all irritation of the skin.

A free sample of any two of these invaluable specialties will be sent on receipt of a two (2) cent stamp to pay postage.

CHESEBROUGH MFG. CO. **16 State Street, NEW YORK**

MENNEN'S

BORATED TALCUM

TOILET POWDER



When March Winds Blow

and outdoor life roughens the skin, use Mennen's—it keeps the skin soft and the complexion clear. A positive relief for **Chapped Hands, Chafing,** and **all Skin Troubles.** Mennen's face on every box. See that you get the Genuine. For sale everywhere, or by mail, 25 cents. Sample free.

Try Mennen's Violet Talcum.

GERHARD MENNEN CO., NEWARK, N.J.

Vapo-Cresolene

(Established 1879.)

"Cures While You Sleep."

Whooping-Cough, Croup, Bronchitis, Coughs, Diphtheria, Catarrh.

Confidence can be placed in a remedy which for a quarter of a century has earned unqualified praise. Restful nights are assured at once.

Cresolene is a Boon to Asthmatics.

ALL DRUGGISTS.

Send Postal for Descriptive Booklet.



Cresolene Antiseptic Throat Tablets for the irritated throat, at your druggist or from us, 10c. in stamps.

The Vapo-Cresolene Co.

180 Fulton St., N. Y.

Leeming-Miles Bldg., Montreal, Canada



Read the Directions

(ON EACH PACKAGE) and FOLLOW them. READ the label in front—be SURE that your SOAP POWDER is

Pearline

You may be using one of the many IMITATIONS which Unscrupulous Grocers tell you (and it's false) is

"Just as good as Pearline"



EASILY APPLIED

QUICKLY DRIED

JAP-A-LAC applied to **SOFTWOOD FLOORS**

makes them look like fine Hardwood. It dries with a beautiful lustre and retains its brilliancy through wear and tear right down to the wood.

Use JAP-A-LAC and discard your old unsanitary carpets

JAP-A-LAC comes in twelve colors and Natural or Clear. It is a stain and varnish combined, and rejuvenates everything about the home.

"You can do the work yourself."

Upon receipt of ten cents, to cover cost of mailing, and the name of your dealer, we will send, FREE OF CHARGE, to any point in the United States, a quarter-pint can of JAP-A-LAC, together with interesting booklet and color card.

Ask your dealer or

THE Glidden VARNISH CO.

Address Dept. J.F. 440 Rockefeller Bldg.

CLEVELAND, OHIO

DUPONT BRUSHES



Made of the best "bristles" and "backs" procurable—put together by the most skilled labor, in an absolutely clean and sanitary factory—the largest and most complete in the world.

DUPONT BRUSHES outlast several ordinary brushes—but cost no more.

Hundreds of styles—in all woods, REAL EBONY, bone, pearl, ivory—for hair, teeth, face, hands, clothes, etc. Sold by Dry Goods, Department, Drug and Jewelry Stores; if not at your dealer's, kindly write us and we will see that you are supplied.

FREE BOOKLET

about Brushes and Bristles, how to select and take care of Brushes, etc., sent on request.

E. DUPONT & CO.,

PARIS, BEAUVAIS, LONDON

New York Office, 26-28 Washington Place



Avoid a Trip to the Police Court

The fine amounts to little—it's the hours of delay, the inconvenience and possible humiliation for you and for those in your company that try the patience and spoil the pleasure of the whole trip.

All this can positively be avoided by equipping your car with

The Warner Auto-Meter

(Registers Speed and Distance)

This little instrument always *tells the truth.* It registers with ABSOLUTE ACCURACY from ¼ mile to 60 miles per hour. It attaches to any Automobile made.

Without it you never know your *exact speed* — and the temptation to go a little faster and a little faster is almost irresistible—you know how it is. And you know, too, what happens to you and your party when you *think* you are going 8 miles an hour and the Policeman's stop watch says 15.

Don't guess yourself into trouble—KNOW and keep out of it. The Warner Auto-Meter is your salvation.

And it's your ONLY salvation.

Because the Warner Auto-Meter is the only speed indicator which is sensitive enough to be absolutely and unfailingly accurate at *speeds under 10 miles an hour.*

Because it's the only one which works perfectly in all positions and at all angles, on rough roads or smooth, up hill or down.

Because it's the only one which changes with the *speed alone* and in which the indicator does not dance back and forth from the jar of the car.

The Warner Auto-Meter is the only speed indicator which is actuated by the same fixed, unchangeable Magnetism which makes the Mariner's Compass reliable FOREVER under all conditions.

No one else can use Magnetism to determine the speed of an Automobile, though it's the only *positive* and *sure* way. Because there is just one way in which Magnetism can successfully be used for this purpose and *we have Patented that way.*

There is nothing about the Warner Auto-Meter which can give out, or wear out, or get out of adjustment. It is the only speed-indicator made without cams, plates or levers, and in which there is *no friction.* Friction wears away the cams and levers in other speed indicators, which are necessarily so small that *1-1000 of an inch* wear will throw out the reading from *one to five miles per hour.*

One Warner Auto-Meter will last a lifetime. It is as sensitive as a Compass and as *Solid as a Rock.* Otherwise it couldn't stand our severe service-test, which is equivalent to a trip of

160,000 Miles at 50 Miles per Hour on Granite Pavements Riding Solid Tires.

The practical Warner Testing Machine is shown in Fig. 1. The wheel connection of the Auto-Meter is attached to a shaft running

Figure 1



200 revolutions per minute. Across this shaft lies a plank which is hinged at one end and has the Auto-Meter attached to the other. Brazed to the shaft is a knob of steel, which at every revolution "bumps" the plank, giving to the Auto-Meter *200 shocks per minute* while it is showing a speed of *50 miles per hour.*

Each one of these shocks is more severe than would be suffered in an entire season's riding. After running 10 hours a day for THREE MONTHS, actual tests show the Auto-Meter to be recording the speed with the same accuracy as at first within 1-1000 of 1%, or less than *6 inches per mile.*

No other Speed Indicator on Earth could Stand this Test.

This is why we sell each Auto-Meter on a

10 YEARS GUARANTEE

and why we gladly renew any Auto-Meter (which has not been injured by accident) if the Magnet (the HEART of the instrument) is less accurate than 1-10 of 1% after 10 years use.

We will gladly tell you more about this wonderful instrument if you will write us.

If you write TODAY we will send you something every motorist will prize—our **Free Book—"Auto Pointers."**

The Warner Instrument Co., 113 Roosevelt St., Beloit, Wis.

(The Auto-Meter is on sale by all first-class dealers and at most Garages.)

THE WASHABLE WALL COVERING SANITAS



Three Interiors designed by the Sanitas Department of Interior Decoration.



BEAUTIFUL AMERICAN HOMES

To make your home beautiful is as simple as admiring your neighbor's beautiful home. If soft well-balanced color schemes, and dainty wall paper patterns appeal strongly to you, why not see how your library or dining room would look in a new dress of Sanitas, altogether unlike the old fashioned styles of which people are growing so tired.

Artistic Sketches Entirely Free

We will gladly send you from our Art Department original pencil sketches for the decoration in Sanitas, of any room in your house, if you will first tell us their general character. With the sketches we will send several appropriate samples of Sanitas in harmonious colors and patterns. In beauty and cleanliness Sanitas is as great an advance over wall paper as the porcelain bath over the painted tin tub.

Sanitas cannot absorb smoke, moisture, dust or germs. Simply wiping it off with

A DAMP CLOTH CLEANS IT PERFECTLY

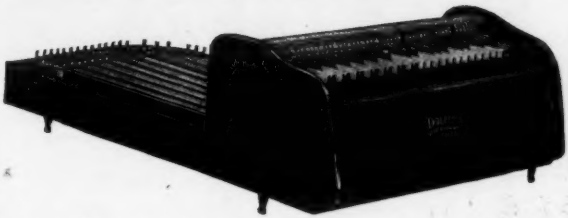
Sanitas is printed in oil colors upon a cloth foundation. It is not glossy, but has a rich, soft tone. Will never fade and cannot crack, peel, discolor, or stain. It is hung like wall paper and costs no more. Send for the sketches and samples.

MERITAS is the name of an oilcloth that WON'T crack or lose its pattern after a little wear. It is guaranteed by the world's greatest maker and is sold at the same price as unguaranteed makes. SEND FOR SAMPLES.

Standard Table Oil Cloth Company,
Dept. A, 320 Broadway New York.

DOLCEOLA

A New and Wonderful Musical Instrument



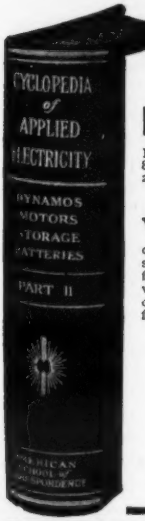
Played with keys like a piano. Volume of tone equal to two mandolins and two guitars. In a class by itself.

Any tune you can whistle or sing you can play on the Dolceola. The great simplicity with which the novice can produce sweet music is the Dolceola's greatest charm.

For children's use it is a most charming and economical stepping stone to the piano and will tend to develop in the child God's most exquisite gift—Music.

The Dolceola is not a toy but a practical musical instrument, with a complete piano action. It affords much pleasure and instruction to everyone, both old and young. Write for our handsomely illustrated Catalog fully describing this instrument which also contains letters of endorsement from the leading Musicians, Teachers and Players in the country. Ask your music dealer to show it to you; if he has not got it in stock send us his name and we will in turn send you *free* a handsome ivory-finished napkin ring. **Splendid inducements offered to agents.**

The **TOLEDO SYMPHONY CO., 738 Jefferson Ave., Toledo, Ohio**



Cyclopedia of APPLIED ELECTRICITY

Five volumes. 2500 pages, size of page 8x10 inches. Bound in ½ Red Morocco. Over 2000 illustrations. We will send the entire

Five Volumes FREE

on five days' approval, express prepaid. If satisfactory send $1 down and $2 per month for nine months; otherwise notify us and we will transfer the books free. Cash with order, $18.00. Money refunded if not satisfactory.

Magnetism—Wireless Telegraph
Telautograph
Direct Current Dynamos and Motors
Storage Batteries
Electric Lighting, Railways
Management of Dynamos and Motors
Power Stations
Alternating Current Machinery
Power Transmission
Mercury Vapor Converter
Telephony—Automatic Telephone
Wireless Telephony

American School of Correspondence
CHICAGO, ILL.

Mention Ainslee's Magazine



FRENCH—GERMAN—SPANISH—ITALIAN

Spoken, Taught and Mastered by the

LANGUAGE PHONE-METHOD

Combined with

The Rosenthal Common Sense Method of Practical Linguistry

The Latest and Best Work of Dr. Richard S. Rosenthal

YOU HEAR THE EXACT PRONUNCIATION OF EACH WORD AND PHRASE. A few minutes' practice several times a day at spare moments gives a thorough mastery of conversational **French, German, Spanish** or **Italian.**

Send for testimonials, booklet and latter.

THE LANGUAGE-PHONE METHOD
1105D Metropolis Bldg., Broadway and 16th St., N. Y.



Army Auction Bargains

Revolvers	$ .50 up	Officer's Sword (new)	$1.50
Revolver Holsters	.10 "	Side-arm Swords	.20
Haversacks	.10 "	Bayonets	.10
Knapsacks	.50 "	Carbine Boot	.75
Carbines	.80 "	Cross Rifles (dozen)	1.00
Muskets	1.65 "	Sabers "	1.00
Saddles	1.90 "	Screw Drivers "	1.00
Saddle Bags (pair)	.75 "	Linen Collars "	.30
Bridles	.65 "	Brass Letters "	.35
Navy Hats	.10 "	Blue Flannel Shirts	1.50
Army Campaign Hats	.35 "	Gunners' Hammers	.10
Leggins (pair)	.15 "	Army Spades "	.65

Army Uniforms, consisting of New Helmet, Coat, Trousers, all for $1.65

176-page Large Illustrated Catalog mailed (stamps) 12c

FRANCIS BANNERMAN, 501 Broadway, New York

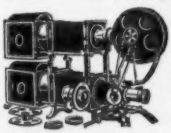
Largest Stock in the world Government Auction Goods. 15 acres storage—2¾ acres Broadway salesroom.

Learn to be an Actor.

Salary $20 to $75 per week. That is what I pay my actors and actresses. I teach the Dramatic Art by mail. My theatre gives performances every night in the year. ***I can place you when qualified.*** Send 2c. stamp for particulars.

F. W. DIEMER, Manager and Prop'r DIEMER THEATRE
And Proprietor of Diemer's School of Dramatic Art,
SPRINGFIELD, MO.

IT PAYS BIG To Amuse The Public With Motion Pictures



NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY as our instruction Book and "Business Guide" tells all. We furnish Complete Outfits with Big Advertising Posters, etc. Humorous dramas brimful of fun, travel, history, religion, temperance work and songs illustrated. One man can do it. **Astonishing Opportunity** in any locality for a man with a little money to show in churches, school houses, lodge halls, theatres, etc. **Profits $10 to over $100 per night.** Others do it, **why not you?** It's easy; write to us and we'll tell you how. **Catalogue free.**

AMUSEMENT SUPPLY CO., 463 Chemical Bank Bldg., CHICAGO.



An "Overcoat" For Your Stomach

Disease and Death lie in wait for the man who chills his stomach with indigestible food. You wear an overcoat to keep in the natural warmth of your body. Overcoats will not warm a poorly nourished stomach. The best "overcoat" for your stomach is a heat-making food. Such a food is

Shredded Whole Wheat Biscuit

It contains all the heat-making, strength-giving elements of the whole wheat, steam-cooked and drawn into fine porous shreds.

Try it for breakfast this way:

Heat the Biscuit in an oven to restore crispness—don't burn—pour hot milk over it, dipping the milk over it until the shreds are swollen; then pour a little cream over the top of the Biscuit.

Shredded Wheat keeps the stomach sweet and clean and the bowels healthy and active.

TRISCUIT is the Shredded Whole Wheat Cracker, better than bread as a toast, with butter, cheese or preserves. The "Vital Question" Cook Book sent free.



"It's All in the Shreds"

THE NATURAL FOOD COMPANY, Niagara Falls, N. Y.

$200.00 IN CASH PRIZES FREE

Other Prizes are Given for Sending us Subscriptions; but THIS $200.00 IN CASH PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED ON APRIL 16, ABSOLUTELY FREE, to the persons sending us the neatest correct solutions. : : : : : : : :

Arrange the 39 letters printed in the centre groups into the names of six cities of the United States. Can you do it? Large CASH PRIZES, as listed below, to those who send in the neatest solutions, will be given away on **April 16. First Prize, $50.00 in Gold. Second Prize, $25.00 in Gold. Third Prize, $15.00 in Gold. Fourth Prize, $10.00 in Gold. Five Prizes of $5.00 each. Ten Prizes of $2.50 each. Fifty Prizes of $1.00 each—Making a Total of Two Hundred Dollars in Prizes.** Don't send us ANY MONEY when you answer this advertisement, as there is absolutely no condition to secure any one of these prizes. **RULES GOVERNING THE CONTEST**—In preparing the names of the six cities, the letters in each group can only be used as many times as they appear, and no letter can be used that does not appear. After you have found the six correct names you will have used every letter in the 39 exactly as many times as it appears. These prizes ARE GIVEN, as we wish to have our Magazine brought prominently to the attention of everyone living in the United States. Our Magazine is carefully edited and filled with the choicest literary matter that the best authors produce. **TRY AND WIN.** If you make out the six names, send the solutions at once—who knows but what you will WIN A LARGE PRIZE? Any way, we do not want you to send any money with your letter, and a contest like this is very interesting. Our magazine is a fine, large paper, filled with fascinating stories of love and adventure, and now has a circulation of 400,000 copies each issue. We will send **FREE** a copy of the latest issue of our Magazine, to every one who answers this advertisement. **COMMENCE RIGHT AWAY ON THIS CONTEST** and you will find it a very ingenious mix-up of letters, which can be straightened out to spell the names of six well-known cities of the United States. Send in the names right away. As soon as the contest closes you will be notified if you have won a prize. This and other most liberal offers are made to introduce one of the very best New York magazines into every home in the United States. WE DO NOT WANT ONE CENT OF YOUR MONEY. When you have made out the names of these cities, write them neatly and plainly and send it to us, and you will hear from us promptly BY RETURN MAIL. A copy of our fascinating MAGAZINE WILL BE SENT FREE to everyone answering this advertisement. Do not delay. Send in your answer immediately. Understand, the neatest correct solutions win the prizes. WE INTEND TO GIVE AWAY VAST SUMS OF MONEY in the future, just as we have done in the past, to advertise our CHARMING MAGAZINE. We find it is the very best advertising we can get to offer LARGE PRIZES. Here are the names and addresses of a few people we have recently awarded PRIZES: M. M. Hannah, Fernwood, Miss., $75.00; H. A. Parmelee, Milford, Neb., $61.00; Kate E. Dunlap, 138 N. Hill street, Los Angeles, Cal., $61.00; Mrs. E. Preister, Richmond, Tex., $55.00; M. G. Christenson, Gregg, Minn., $50.00; Mrs. C. E. Welting, 1330 Lauderdale street, Memphis, Tenn., $50.00; Mrs. Harriet S. Bullard, 120 Intendencia street, Pensacola, Fla., $40.00; J. C. Henry, Box 118, Sligo, Pa., $25.00; Henry Perry, Central Islip, L. I., N.Y., $25.00; James A. Cooter, Holden, Mo., $25.00; Evelyn S. Murray, 132 S. Central Avenue, Austin, Chicago, Ill., $25.00; Mrs. L. D. Puffenberger, 340 West Forty-fifth Street, New York City, N. Y., $20.00.

We could go on and point to hundreds of names of people who have gained large sums of money from our contests, but only give a few names. The solution can be worked out by an alert and clever person, and it will amply pay you to TRY AND SPELL OUT THESE CITIES. Brains and energy nowadays are winning many golden prizes. Study it very carefully and let us see if you are clever and smart enough to spell out the cities. We would rather take this way of advertising our excellent Magazine than spending many thousands of dollars in other foolish ways. We freely and cheerfully give the money away. YOU MAY WIN. We do not care who gets the money. TO PLEASE OUR READERS IS OUR DELIGHT. The question is, Can you get the correct solution? If you can do so, write the names of the cities and your full address plainly in a letter and mail it to us, and you will hear from us promptly by return mail. Lazy and foolish people neglect these grand free offers and then wonder and complain about their bad luck. There are always plenty of opportunities for clever, brainy people who are always alert and ready to grasp a real good thing. We have built up our enormous business by being alert and liberal in our GREAT OFFERS. We are continually offering our readers RARE AND UNUSUAL prizes. We have a big capital, and anyone can easily ascertain about our financial condition. We intend to have the largest circulation for our high-class Magazine in the world. In this progressive age publishers find that they must be liberal in giving away prizes. It is the successful way to get your Magazine talked about. Of course, if you are easily discouraged and are not patient and are not willing to spend any time in trying to work out the solution, you certainly cannot expect to win. USE YOUR BRAINS. Write the names of the cities and send them to us, and we will be just as much pleased as you are. We desire someone to be successful, and as it does not cost you one cent to solve and answer this contest, it will be very foolish for you to pass it by. It will only require you to spend some of your leisure time. SUCCESS IS FOR ENERGETIC AND THOUGHTFUL PEOPLE, and the cause of FAILURE IS LACK OF INTEREST AND LAZINESS. So, dear reader, do not pass this advertisement without trying hard to make A SOLUTION OF THE LINES OF LETTERS PRINTED IN THE CENTRE OF THIS ADVERTISEMENT. We suggest that you carefully read this offer several times before giving up the idea of solving the puzzle. Many people write us kind and grateful letters, profusely thanking us for our prompt and honest dealings. It always pays to give attention to our grand and liberal offers. OUR PRIZES have gladdened the hearts of many persons who needed the money. If you need money you will give attention to this special offer this very minute. If you solve it, write us immediately.

This is the Puzzle

O C A C H C I
N O T S O B
E L S E T A T
A H O A M
T I D O E R T
L A N T A A T

Can You Solve It?

DON'T DELAY. **WE WILL GIVE OTHER PRIZES THIS SEASON.** Get your name on our list and win a prize. Do not delay. Write plainly.

ADDRESS

THE HOPKINS PUBLISHING COMPANY

22 NORTH WILLIAM STREET, NEW YORK CITY



How Much Salary Are You WORTH?

That is the question asked by the employer of to-day. How much salary are you WORTH—What can you do to earn it? If you can do one thing well you are in **demand all the time, and are worth from four to ten times as much as the man of no special ability.**

The International Correspondence Schools were founded and Five Million Dollars have been invested to help men of *no special ability;* men who had to leave school early; men who are earning but little and struggling against adversity in uncongenial positions. The I. C. S. does this great work **by mail** at *an expense so small anyone can afford it*—the worker neither leaving home nor losing time. One spare hour each day will do it. So wonderful has been the success of this system that a *partial* record just completed shows the names and addresses of 54,000 students who have actually been benefited by the I. C. S.

Every man or woman who can read and write is eligible. To learn how easily and quickly *you* can be helped, indicate on **the coupon** the kind of position you would like. In return you will receive without cost or obligation, literature, information and personal advice of the most helpful character. Isn't such a promise from such an Institution worthy of investigation?

International Correspondence Schools
Box 1199, SCRANTON, PA.

Please explain, without further obligation on my part, how I can qualify for a larger salary in the position before which I have marked X

Bookkeeper	Mechan'l Draughtsman
Stenographer	Telephone Eng'eer
Advertisement Writer	Elec. Lighting Supt.
Show Card Writer	Mech. Engineer
Window Trimmer	Surveyor
Ornamental Designer	Stationary Engineer
Illustrator	Civil Engineer
Civil Service	Build'g Contractor
Chemist	Architect'l Draughtsman
Textile Mill Supt.	Architect
Electrician	Bridge Engineer
Elec. Engineer	Structural Engineer
Foreman Plumber	Mining Engineer

Name _____

Street and No. _____

City _____ State _____



The American Portable Vibrator For Home Use

Weight 2½ Lbs.

Is endorsed by the most celebrated physicians. It prevents wrinkles and blackheads and permanently beautifies and preserves the complexion. Its use will increase the circulation of the scalp; loosen the skin and expel the dandruff, which absorbs the oil needed to nourish the hair. Its application develops the muscles and tissues of the neck and arms and for people accustomed to massage, the **American Vibrator** is indispensable. It weighs but 2½ pounds and can be attached to any electric light socket and be conveniently used by any member of the family.

The **American Vibrator** is sold on an absolute guarantee, on easy terms, at a price within reach of all. We will ship you a Vibrator on trial and will not ask you to pay us one cent until you have convinced yourself of its wonderful merits. For full particulars of our plan write at once for our Special Booklet No. 10 S to

AMERICAN VIBRATOR CO.,
Chemical Building, St. Louis.



HAIR

Our Guarantee Backed By The Bank.

¶ We will send you by prepaid express, an Evans Vacuum Cap, to use sixty days, and if you do not cultivate a sufficient growth of hair within this time to convince you that this method is effective, simply notify the Jefferson Bank of St. Louis, and they will return the price of the Cap to you. ¶ The Cap is used a few minutes each day, and even one application produces a pleasant, tingling sensation, which denotes the presence of new life in the scalp and which cannot be obtained by any other means. Where the life principle has not become extinct, this method of stimulation will usually develop a growth of hair about an inch in length, within the trial period. ¶ A series of letters from a number of people, giving their experience with the Evans Vacuum Cap, appears in this month's "Metropolitan" and "Everybody's" magazine, and we will send copy of these letters, together with an illustrated book, to anyone interested. ¶ We have no agents or traveling representatives. All orders for our invention come through the Jefferson Bank and each customer is protected by guarantee issued by the Bank. For further information address

EVANS VACUUM CAP CO.,
301 Fullerton Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

GRANDMOTHER SAYS



Nothing Cures Rheumatism *or* Kills Pain like

Sloan's Liniment

Price 25¢ 50¢ and $1.00
Sold by all Druggists

DR. EARL S. SLOAN,
BOSTON, MASS., U.S.A.

ESTABLISHED 1875.

A RECORD OF 31 YEARS

of successful treatment of the

DRUG AND LIQUOR HABITS

by

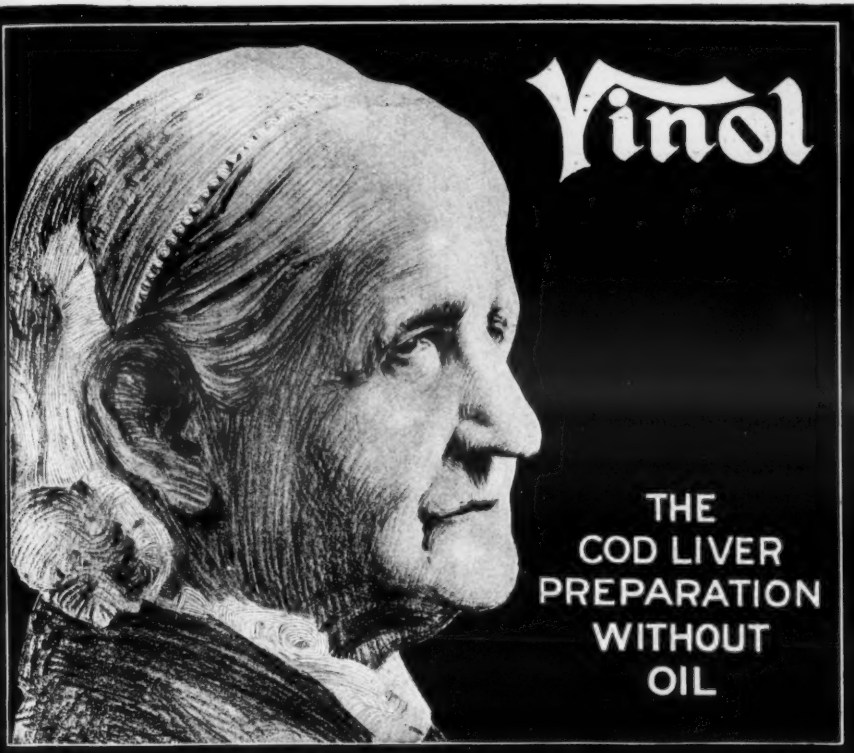


THE DR. J. L. STEPHENS CO.

Sanatorium at Lebanon, Ohio. Fine location. Large grounds. Easily reached by train and electric cars from Cincinnati. 30,000 cases cured. **No restraint. Rates reasonable. Cure guaranteed.** If it is not convenient to take treatment at the Sanatorium, write us for our **Home Remedy** that has cured thousands who could not come and who had failed elsewhere. Each individual case comes under the direct personal supervision and care of our Physicians. Write for our booklet of testimonials and full information.

HOME TREATMENT.

THE DR. J. L. STEPHENS CO. Dept. S 5, Lebanon, Ohio



Vinol is superseding old-fashioned cod liver oil and emulsions

Because, without a drop of oil or disagreeable feature, it contains all the medicinal elements of cod liver oil, actually taken from the fresh cods' livers.

By our process the oil, having no value either as a medicine or food, is separated from the medicinal elements and thrown away.

Unlike old-fashioned cod liver oil and emulsions, Vinol is deliciously palatable, agreeable to the weakest stomach, and therefore unequaled as a body builder and strength creator for old people, puny children, weak, run-down men and women, after sickness, and for all pulmonary diseases.

Vinol is not a patent medicine. Everything it contains is named on the label.

Sold on the Guarantee Plan at THE leading drug store in every city and town in the United States

Also NEW YORK: Riker's Drug Stores. Sixth Ave. and 23d St.; cor. Broadway and 9th. **Hegeman & Co.** 200 and 205 Broadway; 200 W. 125th; 1917 Amsterdam Ave.; 2885 Third Ave. **Kinsman's Drug Stores.** 601 Eighth Ave.; 125th St. and Eighth Ave. **J. Jungmann.** 1020 Third Ave.; 428 Columbus Ave.; 1 East 42d St. **Bolton Drug Co.** (Brooklyn.)
BOSTON: Jaynes & Co. 50 Washington St. cor. Hanover; 877 Washington St. cor. Common; 143 and 129 Summer St.
PHILADELPHIA: Geo. B. Evans. 1106 Chestnut; 17th and Chestnut; 1012 Market; 8th and Arch; 2330 North Front.
CHICAGO: The Public Drug Co. 150 State St.
ST. LOUIS: Wolff Wilson Drug Co.
INDIANAPOLIS: Henry Huder.
DETROIT: Central Drug Co.
CINCINNATI: Dow's Drug Stores.
PITTSBURG: May's Drug Store.
CLEVELAND: Marshall's Drug Stores.
SAN FRANCISCO: Owl Drug Co.

Exclusive agencies for Vinol given to one druggist in a place. Look for Vinol agency where you live—if there is none, write us.
Sent, express paid, on receipt of $1.00 by any Vinol agent, or by CHESTER KENT & CO., Chemists, Boston, Mass.

A New Fold Collar

Styles move in cycles.

The "Kermit," a new, yet old style, is the original fold collar with the addition of up-to-date fit and set, and the stylish wide stitching

It will appeal to those who find any discomfort in the ridged lock front style, because of the give and take of the V shaped opening.

It will also attract those desiring something different from the styles almost universally worn.



Corliss Coon Collars are 2 for 25c. Folds are four-ply—always and in all styles. But, at the "plague spot," where other collars go to pieces quickly, we cut away enough interlining (where the illustration is shaded), to let the collar fold without straining the fine surface material.

Ask your furnisher to show you Corliss-Coon Collars, or write at once for "Collar Kinks"—our book of new and leading styles. If your dealer does not willingly send for any style you like, we will supply you by mail direct from our factory on receipt of the price—2 for 25c.—$1.50 per dozen.

Write at once for "Collar Kinks" or send 25c. for two Kermit Collars and enjoy their perfect fit, good style and long wear.

Corliss, Coon & Co., Dept. G . . . . . Troy, N. Y.



GLOGAU'S ALCOHOL-GAS STOVE

New Improved Model

$1. EXPRESS PAID

Can do everything and more than a gas stove does. **Indispensable** for nursery, sick-room, camping, shaving; curling or flat iron; for tourists, boarders, light housekeeping, or **wherever gas is not available** or **desirable**. Vaporizes alcohol into gas, increasing **its efficiency 8 times. Consumes but a few cents' worth** of alcohol **an hour.** Will boil quart of water in 9 minutes. Smokeless and odorless. Uses either wood or grain alcohol. Simple; cannot get out of order. Safe; will sustain weight of 100 lbs. Extinguishes instantly (blows out like a candle). **Non-Explosive.** Solid Spun Brass and **NICKEL PLATED.** Protected by Asbestos lining. Sent anywhere, **Express paid, $1.** Beware of dangerous imitations. Genuine is stamped with **Our Name. Agents Wanted**

GLOGAU & CO., 306 DICKEY BUILDING, CHICAGO

The "Ocularscope" Free



GET GLASSES AT WHOLESALE PRICES

Examine your own eyes without an oculist. Send for our "OCULARSCOPE," the latest invention of the 20th Century. *Sent Free*, with our beautiful Illustrated Catalogue of Spectacles and eye glasses. *Mail order only.* Send to-day.



GRAND RAPIDS WHOLESALE OPTICIANS, 900 Houseman Building, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Why Fool

with an ink dropper and old style pen?

The Standard Fountain Pen

Self Filling, Self Cleaning

No ink dropper—**no** muss—**no** smear. **No** hump—**no** twist—**no** valves. **No** extra parts—**no** extra price. The Standard is a perfect fountain pen. It looks the same as the common kind—writes as well as the best—costs the same or less. You don't have to pay for the up-to-date features. Made with solid 14-karat gold pen of any style, guaranteed satisfactory. It cleans itself automatically as well as fills itself.

SPECIAL OFFER.—Write us for Catalogue 71. If your dealer has not the Standard Pen, let us tell you how to get one free in return for his name and your co-operation.

Standard Pen Co., 371 Baker Bldg., Toledo, O.



President Suspenders

THEY MOVE NONE SO EASY



Every active man abhors a dress encumbrance.

You may be so accustomed to the wearing, dragging pull of ordinary suspenders that you hardly notice it. *It's there*, however, and when you have worn President Suspenders an hour you appreciate the difference.

Whether you stoop or stand, ride, run or walk, the patented back of President Suspenders *imperceptibly* follows every motion without a pull or a tug, so evenly is the strain distributed.

It relieves two-thirds the stretch on the webbing, which means that much longer service to wearer.

If your dealer attempts substitution order direct. *Read the guarantee ticket.*
50c. and $1.00. Sold everywhere.

The C. A. Edgarton Mfg. Co.
501 Main Street, Shirley, Mass.

Ball Bearing Garters

Ball-Bearing Garters hold the sock easily, smoothly, and securely.

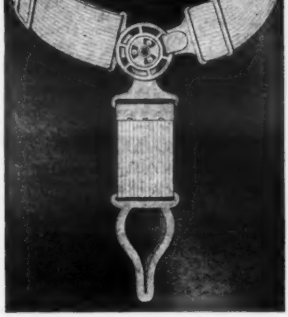
The ball-bearing swivel fits them to every position of the leg.

No relaxing, no slipping, no *unhealthy binding*.

If your dealer cannot supply you, send 25c. for trial pair, mentioning color desired.

Suspenders and Garters in handsome combination box, 75c

The C. A. Edgarton Mfg. Co.
501 Main St., Shirley, Mass.



Take Your Pants Off

We will make you a new $5.00 Pair Free.



Have your new suit made by the best tailors in the United States.

We make to order from strictly all-wool cloths for only **$10** the latest style suits, tailored and finished **Equal to The Best.**

Our **$10** suits lead the fashions—they are up-to-date—and guaranteed six months solid wear, or **YOUR MONEY BACK.**

We will accept your first order without **one cent deposit**, you pay for suit only after thorough examination and without obligation to accept, unless a perfect fit and just as claimed and **equal to any $25.00 suit.**

Remember,

an extra pair of fine all-wool, stylish **$5.00** pants, also a fancy-dress vest, also a beautiful leather-handled patent suit case, all **FREE with every suit.** We dress you in style for everyday, Sunday and evening, all for **only $10.** Write for **free samples,** fashion plate, tape and measurement blanks. Address,

THE FIFTH AVENUE TAILORS,

333 Kesner Building, Chicago, Illinois.

Reference: Royal Trust Bank. Capital and surplus, $900,000.

$1.00 Yale

Stem Winding
Stem Setting

10 Days' Free
Pocket Test



Address a postal to New Haven Clock Co., New Haven, Conn., (capital, $1,000,000.00), and just say, "I want a Dollar Yale for 10 days' free trial." That's all you have to do. Our part is not so easy.

We must place in your hands about $2.00 worth of watch by ordinary standards, for we promise to hand every responsible person a stem winding, stem setting watch fully guaranteed by the New Haven Clock Co. (capital, $1,000,000.00), printed guarantee in back of case.

Now, the ordinary Dollar watch is wound and set like a cheap alarm clock—by attachments you can't get at without opening the back of the case.

But the stem of a Dollar Yale is no dummy. No-sir-ee! It has a double motion—turn it back and forth a few times and the watch is wound for 24 hours.

Press the stem in, and then your twist sets the hands forward or back, as you choose. It all works just like the handsomest time-piece you ever saw. Just put the Dollar Yale in your pocket and wear it 10 days before you decide to buy. After 10 days we want a dollar or the watch—that's all.

No, just one thing more. This introductory offer may be withdrawn at any time if it crowds our capacity, so don't delay, write at once.

NEW HAVEN CLOCK CO.
150 Hamilton Street, NEW HAVEN, CONN.



DAVERMAN'S SPECIAL OFFER!

Our big book of plans

"MODERN HOMES"

(Regular price $1.00) **Special Price 25c** (Silver)

Enclose 12c extra for postage.

Shows 150 designs of practical homes ranging from $400 to $18000—floor plans, exterior views, approximate estimates of cost. Colonial house shown in cut above has been built over 300 times (3 good sized chambers and bath room on second floor).

Full Blue Print working plans and specifications of this house (without change)

ONLY $10 00

For $5.00 we will submit a sketch of your own ideas worked up into practical shape.

We can plan your house no matter where you live.

We planned over 3000 houses in every part of the country during 1905. We can plan a home for you. Send 25c and 12c postage for our book.

J. H. DAVERMAN & SON

World's Greatest Dwelling Architects

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

Est. 1882. 307 Porter Block.



Subscribe for Art in Architecture, our monthly magazine $1.00 per year. Devoted to Artistic Homes and Home Furnishings.

Rider Agents Wanted



in each town to ride and exhibit sample 1906 model. *Write for Special Offer.*

Finest Guaranteed 1906 Models $10 to $27

with Coaster-Brakes and Puncture-Proof tires.

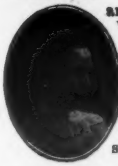
1904 & 1905 Models all of best makes $7 to $12

500 Second-Hand Wheels All Makes and Models, good as new **$3 to $8**

Great Factory Clearing Sale. We Ship on Approval *without a cent deposit*, pay the freight and allow **TEN DAYS' FREE TRIAL.** Tires, coaster-brakes, sundries, etc., half usual prices. **Do not buy till** you get our catalog. *Write at once.*

MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. S110 Chicago

Send Me 8 cents



and names of two flower loving friends. I will start you with 4 packets of pure, fresh seed—**Dwarf Nasturtiums**—20 kinds; **Royal Show Pansies**—100 colors; **Sweet Peas**—40 varieties; **Asters**—all kinds.

FREE—"Floral Culture," and 14th Annual Catalogue, with big list of rare seed bargains; also my offer of $100 cash prizes for pictures of best lawns and yards sown with the famous Lippincott seeds. Write TODAY before you forget.

Pioneer Seedswoman of America

MISS O. H. LIPPINCOTT

429 10th St., S., MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

D. and C. Roses

are the best. *Always on their own roots.* Plants mailed to any point in the United States. Safe arrival guaranteed. Over 50 years' experience. **Flower and Vegetable Seeds a specialty.** A premium with every order. Write for

NEW GUIDE TO ROSE CULTURE

for 1906—the leading rose catalogue of America. 118 pages. Mailed free. Describes over 1,000 varieties. Tells how to grow them and all other desirable flowers. Established 1850. 70 greenhouses.

THE DINGEE & CONARD CO., West Grove, Pa.

4 Trains a Day via the MONON ROUTE and C. H. & D. Ry.

Only 8 Hours between CHICAGO and CINCINNATI

BY DAY, Parlor and Dining Cars.

BY NIGHT, Palace Sleeping and Compartment Cars.

CHAS. H. ROCKWELL, Traffic Manager. FRANK J. REED, Gen. Pass. Agt. 200 Custom House Place, Chicago.



LEARN POULTRY CULTURE

We can teach you thoroughly, successfully. Our original, personal correspondence course of instruction is interesting, practical, costs but little. **A safe guide to beginners,** invaluable to old poultry raisers. We teach you how to make any plot of ground, large or small, pay a sure **dividend of from 25 to 50 per cent on the investment.** Individual attention given each student. Write for free booklet telling how to make poultry pay. **COLUMBIA SCHOOL OF POULTRY CULTURE, 174 Harvey Road, Waterville, N. Y.**

SHOEMAKER'S BOOK on POULTRY



and Almanac for 1906 contains 224 pages, with many fine colored plates of fowls true to life. It tells all about chickens, their care, diseases and remedies. All about **Incubators** and how to operate them. All about poultry houses and how to build them. It's really an encyclopædia of chickendom. You need it. **Price only 15cts.**

C. C. Shoemaker, Box 519, Freeport, Ill.

M & M PORTABLE HOUSES

THE ORIGINAL AND RELIABLE

Summer Cottages Automobile Houses
Children's Play Houses Hunters' Cabins
Photograph Galleries, Etc.

Made by automatic machinery where the wood grows. Better built and better looking than you can have constructed at home and at much less cost. Wind and water tight. Artistic in design. Constructed on the **Unit System.** (Panels interchangeable.)

Houses shipped complete in every detail. Can be erected and ready for occupancy from 6 to 24 hours after arrival at destination, according to size of house.

NO NAILS NO STRIKES
NO CARPENTERS NO WORRY

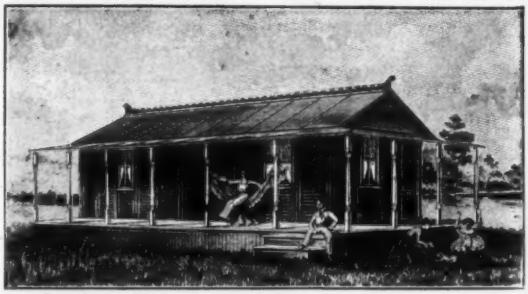
Everything fits. Anyone can erect them.

WE PAY THE FREIGHT

Write to-day for catalogue. Tell us what you want and we will give you a delivered price at once.

Please enclose 2 cent stamp in your inquiry for our Handsome Illustrated Catalogue.

MERSHON & MORLEY COMPANY
200 Broadway SAGINAW, MICH.



CRYSTAL Domino SUGAR



A Triumph in Sugar Making!

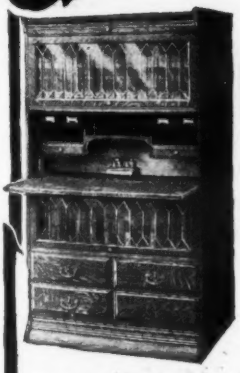
Sold only in 5 lb. sealed boxes!

IMAGINATION COULD NOT CONCEIVE OF A HANDIER AND PRETTIER FORM THAN IS PRESENTED IN "CRYSTAL DOMINO SUGAR." NEITHER COULD THE MOST PARTICULAR PEOPLE ASK FOR MORE PERFECT PURITY OR ECONOMICAL PEOPLE FOR LESS WASTE.

HIGHEST GRADE IN THE WORLD. BEST SUGAR FOR TEA AND COFFEE.

By grocers everywhere.

"GUNN" SECTIONAL BOOK CASES





"YOU DONT GET DONE WHEN YOU BUY A GUNN"

The Gunn Sectional Bookcase is different from all others and superior to them.

It has no unsightly iron bands.

The doors are roller bearing, removable by simply unhooking.

The Gunn Sectional Bookcase is a handsome solid piece of furniture, altho it may be taken apart quickly for storage. The Ladies' desk section gives an ideal home combination. We will ship direct from the factory if not on sale in your town. Our handsome art catalog, F-66, mailed *Free*, will prove a great help in artistically arranging your home library.

The Gunn Furniture Co., Grand Rapids, Mich.

Makers of Gunn Desks and Filing Cabinets.



They get up in the night to eat

MACKINTOSH'S TOFFEE

An Old English Candy

"MORE-ISH" The more you eat — more you want

PURE AND DELICIOUS

5 AND 10 CENTS A PACKAGE

JOHN MACKINTOSH · 78 HUDSON ST. NEW YORK

DEPT. 12

GLYCEROLE



Black and White

Do you feed your shoes? Why not?

Feed your horse well and he will travel well. Leather needs more than a mere "shine." It needs food to keep it in condition. Feed your shoes with **GLYCEROLE.**

BLACK for BLACK SHOES, WHITE for CLOTH SHOES.

They will be softer, more pliant and will wear longer. The polish on your leather shoes will be perfect and lasting. And **WHITE GLYCEROLE** will keep your white canvas shoes—a 1906 Summer fashion—fresh and white as new.

Either of the three: black, white or tan, 25c. at your dealer's; 35c., prepaid from us.

RESTORFF & BETTMANN,
Manufacturers
Dept. G. **426 East 106th Street, New York City.**

Thousands of Testimonials, Some of Them over One-Third of a Century Old.



SONG WRITING

The Quickest Road to
FAME AND FORTUNE
Do you know that Your song may be worth
Thousands of Dollars
Send us your poems to-day. We compose music and arrange compositions.

HAYES MUSIC CO., 22 Star Building, CHICAGO



I CAN HELP YOU MAKE MONEY
NOTHING PAYS LIKE SUCCESS IN WRITING FICTION—1c. to 5c. A WORD.
We sell and syndicate stories and book **MSS.** on commission; we criticise and revise them. **Story-Writing** and **Journalism** taught by mail. Our free booklet, **"Writing for Profit,"** tells how. **THORNTON WEST, Editor-in-Chief,**
THE NATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION
126 The Baldwin, Indianapolis, Ind.



Have You a Dog?
Then let us send you **Polk Miller's celebrated Book on Dogs;** How to Take Care of Them; **the eloquent Senator Vest's masterful Tribute to a Dog,** and **"A Yellow Dog's Love for a Nigger"** (famous poem). We will send you all of the above for 10c just to advertise **Sergeant's Famous Dog Remedies.** Address **POLK MILLER DRUG CO. 808 Main St. Richmond, Va.**



$$$ In Commercial Art
If you have even average ability, **I Can Teach You DRAWING.** I have been successful myself as an artist, and have trained a number of illustrators whose names are well-known to-day.
A Full Year's Art Instruction for $30.00
Write for my illustrated book, **"A New Door to Success,"** which gives full particulars of my course. **Write now.**
GRANT HAMILTON STUDIO
Suite 717, Flatiron Building New York City

Have You Read "SHE" BY H. RIDER HAGGARD

POSSIBLY you have and it is so long ago that you would like to read it again. The many inquiries we have received from persons who have read "AYESHA; OR, THE RETURN OF 'SHE,'"—the companion story to this master piece recently published in *The Popular Magazine*—led us to make arrangements with a leading publisher to supply us with a special limited De Luxe edition of "SHE," handsomely bound and profusely illustrated with twenty-one full page half-tones. It is manifestly the edition that every reader wants.

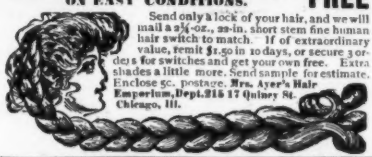
PRICE, ONE DOLLAR
ALL TRANSPORTATION CHARGES PREPAID BY US

STREET & SMITH, Publishers,
79-89 SEVENTH AVE., NEW YORK CITY

GROW YOUR HAIR AND EARN $500.

To advertise our wonderful HAIR-GROWING preparations where they are at present unknown, we offer 50 cash prizes—$500 in GOLD; FREE. Whether you are entirely bald, or have just begun to lose your hair, or never having had much, now wish it luxuriant, YOU HAVE AN EQUAL CHANCE to earn a small fortune and in any case will GROW LUXURIANT HAIR to pay you for your trouble. We find that each new patient is the means of sending us so many others that we can easily afford to pay large sums for new patients. **Write To-day!** The particulars are free, but if you will enclose 5c. to help us pay postage, we will send you a trial treatment consisting of a bottle of Hair Grower, box of Dandruff Cure, a bar of Terebene Soap and a book on the care of the hair which will enable you to become a Hair Specialist yourself. All this sent free in sealed package if you will send 5c. to help defray postage. Address DR. A. N. RHODES CO., HAIR AND SCALP SPECIALISTS, LOWELL, MASS.

***This BEAUTIFUL HAIR SWITCH* ON EASY CONDITIONS. FREE**



Send only a lock of your hair, and we will mail a 2¾-oz., 22-in. short stem fine human hair switch to match. If of extraordinary value, remit $1.50 in 10 days, or secure 3 orders for switches and get your own free. Extra shades a little more. Send sample for estimate. Enclose 5c. postage. **Mrs. Ayer's Hair Emporium, Dept. 215 17 Quincy St. Chicago, Ill.**



I Print My Own
Cards, circulars, etc., with a $5 Press. Small newspaper press $18. Money saved. Money making business anywhere. Typesetting easy by the printed instructions sent. Write to factory for illustrated catalog of presses, type, paper, etc.
The Press Co., Meriden, Conn.

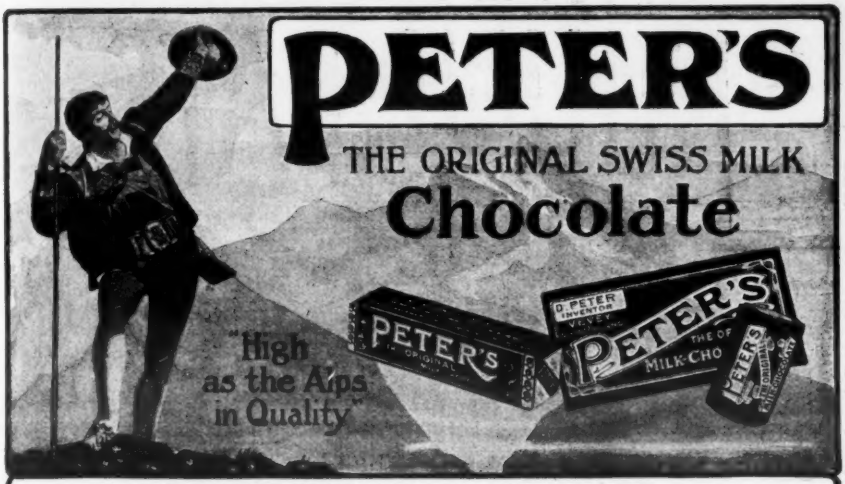
Be Your Own Boss!
MANY MAKE $2,000.00 A YEAR. You have the same chance. Start a Mail Order Business at Home. We tell you how. Money coming in daily. Enormous profits. Everything furnished. Write at once for our "Starter" and FREE particulars.
N. S. KRUEGER CO., 155 Washington Street, Chicago, Ill.

SUPERFLUOUS HAIR



Dr. Rhodes' New Hair Remover will instantly and permanently remove undesirable hair from the face, neck, etc. **Price, $1.**
Free Trial We are not afraid to have you try this wonderful preparation, and you may do so **FREE.** If you will send us 10c. to cover cost of postage and package we will send you a trial bottle; not a dollar bottle, of course, but sufficient to remove considerable hair and furnish a good test. Address
Dr. A. N. Rhodes Co., Lowell, Mass.

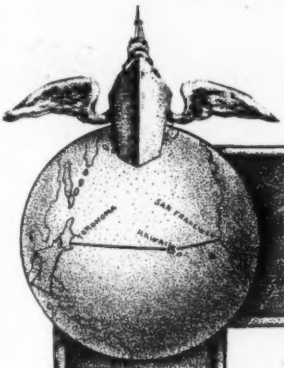
When writing to advertisers please mention Ainslee's



A MESSAGE FROM THE ALPS.

"We send you our best in PETER'S Chocolate." If you cannot get to the world's wonderland, you can yet have the world's wonder in confection-food. **PETER'S, the Original Swiss Milk CHOCOLATE** (for eating), has furnished a delicacy and a food in one luscious combination as distinct from ordinary eating chocolate as the Alps are from foot-hills. There's no describing the taste, yet the tongue can tell it. It has the smooth, rich, full-cream flavor which Swiss milk gives when combined with pure chocolate as only D. Peter of Vevey, Switzerland, blends it. **The proof is in the eating.**

LAMONT, CORLISS & CO., Sole Importers, 78 Hudson Street, NEW YORK.



The **Sunshine Belt** *to the* **Orient** *via the*

PACIFIC MAIL

HOLDS THE TRANS-PACIFIC SPEED RECORD

An ideal ocean voyage over semi-tropical seas to lands of surpassing interest. Chosen by Secretary of War Taft for his Congressional party on account of the speed, size and luxury of service.

FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO HAWAII
JAPAN, CHINA AND THE PHILIPPINES

Write for literature to any R. R. ticket agent or to

PACIFIC MAIL S. S. CO.

NEW YORK SAN FRANCISCO CHICAGO

ROUGH ON RATS

TRADE MARK



Unbeatable Rat Exterminator **Equally Effective against Mice, Roaches, Ants, and Bed Bugs**

Why feed Rats? **Rough on Rats** kills them. Rats are smart but **Rough on Rats** beats them. RATS and MICE instinctively avoid the familiar forms of ready prepared for use doses; **Rough on Rats**, the original and old reliable, being unmixed and all poison can be disguised in many ways, thus completely outwitting them. One 15c. box will make or spread fifty or more little cakes that will kill fifty or more Rats and Mice. Originally designed for Rats and Mice, experience has demonstrated it the most effective of all exterminators of Roaches, Ants, and Bed Bugs. The only thing at all effective against the large Black Cockroach or Beetle. Always does the work and does it right. Fools the Rats, Mice, and Bugs, but never disappoints or fools the buyer. Safely used 30 years.

E. S. WELLS, Chemist SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS **JERSEY CITY, N. J., U.S.A.**

Asthma

HOW to get relief from attacks.
to obtain natural and refreshing sleep.
to regain vigorous health.
to be permanently Cured.

These are burning questions, but are fully answered by the cures made through our Constitutional Treatment.

The careful examination of every case, medicines prescribed to meet the needs of each individual patient and the close observation through weekly reports of every one under our care constitute the secret of our success.

Our Book V answers all.

It's FREE; a postal will bring it; write to-day

Address, P. HAROLD HAYES, Buffalo, N. Y.

Learn the Truth



Do you know that the main cause of unhappiness, ill-health, sickly children and divorce is admitted by physicians and shown by court records to be ignorance of the laws of self and sex.

SEXOLOGY *Illustrated*

Contains the following in one volume—

Knowledge { a Young Man Should Have. a Young Husband Should Have. a Father Should Have. a Father Should Impart to His Son. } **Knowledge** { a Young Woman Should Have. a Young Wife Should Have. a Mother Should Have. a Mother Should Impart to Her Daughter.

Medical Knowledge a Husband and Wife Should Have.

By WILLIAM H. WALLING, A. M., M. D.

Price, postpaid, $2.00 **Table of contents mailed free**

PURITAN PUB. CO., Dept. 85, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Oppenheimer Treatment

FOR ALCOHOLISM

ESTABLISHED 15 YEARS

ALCOHOLIC CRAVING ABSOLUTELY REMOVED IN FROM 12 TO 48 HOURS

NO SUFFERING—NO INJECTIONS—NO DETENTION FROM BUSINESS

Endorsed by a Special Committee of the Legislature of New York, also by prominent men and women throughout the world.

If you "Must Have a Drink"

TO DO BUSINESS

You Possess THE ALCOHOLIC CRAVING

No man can longer take refuge in the hopeless statement, "*I can't stop drinking.*" Any man can stop who will take the OPPENHEIMER TREATMENT.

The OPPENHEIMER TREATMENT gives a man back his interest in and enjoyment of work; it restores his energy and application, increases his value to his employer, and therefore increases his earning capacity. The tabulation of salaries of wage earners of all classes after taking the OPPENHEIMER TREATMENT shows

Earnings Increased 312 per cent.

Any man who wants to recover his lost value to his family, to society and his employer, can do so if he will take the OPPENHEIMER TREATMENT.

REPRESENTATIVE PHYSICIANS in each city of the United States administer the Oppenheimer Treatment. Write for the name and address of the physician in your locality.

OPPENHEIMER INSTITUTE

In writing, please mention this publication. **139 West 34th Street, New York City**



10

"Feminology"

Complete table of contents and sample pages sent FREE.

A plainly told, scientific book about woman, is one of the most fascinating, intensely interesting and valuable works ever written. It tells ***woman*** the vital thing she must know about ***maidenhood*** and ***motherhood,*** and is especially interesting to parents. It treats of marriage, parental inheritance, ***physical culture,*** care of babies, common sense treatment of female diseases, diet, nursing, children's diseases and their care, personal beauty; giving information that is all important to health and happiness. Has 700 pages, beautifully illustrated and **26** colored plates.

CHICAGO, May 2, 1902. "If the information contained in "Feminology" were more widely and timely known and heeded, endless and needless miseries might be avoided."—Chicago Tribune.

Write for 30-page table of contents and see what this wonderful book contains.

C. L. Dressler & Co., 2204 Gladys Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Are You DEAF?

I was deaf myself for 25 years. I perfected and patented a small, invisible ear drum in order to help my own hearing. It is called "The Way Ear Drum," and by the use of these drums I can NOW HEAR WHISPERS. I want all deaf people to write me. I do not claim to "cure" all cases of deafness, neither can I benefit those who were born deaf. But I CAN HELP 90 per cent. of those whose hearing is defective.



Won't you take the trouble to write and find out all about me and my invention? Tell me the cause of your deafness. Geo. P. Way, 1602 Majestic Bldg., Detroit, Mich.

I CAN CURE YOUR EYES



At Your Own Home

No Knife
No Pain
No Risk
No Bandages
No Trouble

P. Chester Madison, M.D.
America's Master Oculist
Copyright

By the

Madison Absorption Method

Miss Sadie Aker, 428 N. Upper, Lexington, Ky., writes:—"I wish I could talk with every person who is afflicted with their eyes, for I am now cured. Dr. Madison is certainly wonderfully endowed."

If your eyes are troubling you I can treat you just as successfully. If you see spots or strings **Beware of Delay** for **Delay Means Blindness.** My new 80 page book on **Diseases of the Eye** (illustrated in colors) will be sent **Free.** A postal will do—**Write Today.** *Cross Eyes Straightened without the knife by My New Method which has never failed.*

P. C. MADISON, M. D., Suite 206. 80 Dearborn Street **CHICAGO**



How Deaf People Are Made to Hear

Ever see a pair of Sound Magnifiers?

They are so soft in the ears one can't tell they are wearing them.

And, no one else can tell either, because they are out of sight when worn. Wilson's Ear Drums are to weak hearing what spectacles are to weak sight.

Because, they are sound-magnifiers, just as glasses are sight-magnifiers.

They rest the Ear Nerves by taking the strain off them—the strain of trying to hear dim sounds. They can be put into the ears, or taken out in a minute, just as comfortably as spectacles can be put on and off.

And, they can be worn for weeks at a time, because they are ventilated and so soft in the ear holes they are not felt even when the head rests on the pillow. They protect raw inner parts of the ear from wind or cold, dust, or sudden and piercing sounds.

* * *

THE PROOF is in our Book, which tells how these tiny sound magnifiers are made, and contains *four hundred letters* from people whose hearing was brought back by their use. BOOK FREE. Send postal for it today—get it by return mail.

WILSON EAR DRUM CO., 428 Todd Bldg., Louisville, Ky.

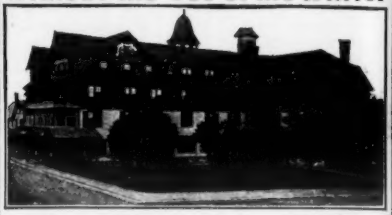
1877. **No New Discovery** 1906.

Can offer more hope in cases of

CANCER

Than exists today by our method

Without the Use of the Knife.

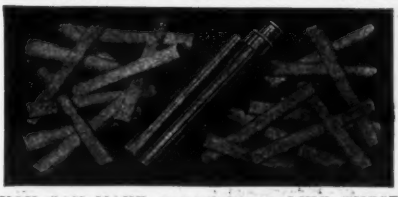


The Berkshire Hills Sanatorium.

The only institution in the world where cancer and tumors (that are accessible) are permanently cured.

Describe your case and we will mail the most complete information ever published on the subject of cancer, and will give an opinion as to what we can accomplish for you. Ask your family physician to investigate. He will be entertained as our guest.

Drs. W. E. Brown & Son, North Adams, Mass.



YOU CAN MAKE **CIGARETTES** LIKE THESE

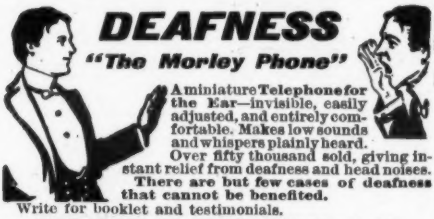
A Practical Novelty for Cigarette Smokers

One Complete Nickled

TURKO CIGARETTE ROLLER

Sent postpaid for **25cts.** Address,

CHARLES W. OLIVER, 135 William St., New York



DEAFNESS

"The Morley Phone"

A miniature Telephone for the Ear—invisible, easily adjusted, and entirely comfortable. Makes low sounds and whispers plainly heard. Over fifty thousand sold, giving instant relief from deafness and head noises. There are but few cases of deafness that cannot be benefited.

Write for booklet and testimonials.

THE MORLEY COMPANY, Dept. 72

31 South 16th Street, Philadelphia

ASTHMA

CURED TO STAY CURED

No relapse. No return of choking spells or other asthmatic symptoms. Whetzel system of treatment approved by best U.S. medical authorities as the only system known to permanently cure the disease. **FREE TEST TREATMENT** including medicines, prepared for anyone giving full description of the case and sending names of two asthmatic sufferers.

Address **FRANK WHETZEL, M. D.**

Dept. D. American Express Building, Chicago.

DEAFNESS CURED AT HOME



Don't waste your time and money in experiments. My method cures deafness and all head noises **TO STAY CURED.** Absolute and positive proofs sent on application. **NO PAIN,** no loss of time. The method is my own and cannot be obtained elsewhere; it has been tried and found true, **IT CURES.**

WRITE TODAY for my book, "Deafness, its Cause and Cure," **FREE.** Address

GUY CLIFFORD POWELL, M.D., **252 BANK BUILDING, PEORIA, ILL.**

MANY PERSONS
cannot use glycerine or greasy creams. To such

FROSTILLA

has proven a great boon. It soothes an irritated surface so quickly.

IT WORKS LIKE A CHARM.



DEAR SIR: We look upon this greatest of all toilet articles as simply wonderful. It has been in use in our home for years and we could not get on well without it. My wife is very fond of doing fancy work, but before we learned of Frostilla, the work of the home made her hands so rough in cold weather that she could not handle silk or worsted. Then she would resort to a treatment of glycerine on retiring at night but this was slow and often painful. With Frostilla it is simply necessary to anoint the hands and in a few minutes it dries and the skin becomes as soft and smooth as a babe's, and she can take up her fancy work at any time without delay or annoyance. R. F. BOGARDUS.

Sold Everywhere. If your dealer has not got it send 25 cents for bottle by mail prepaid.

CLAY W. HOLMES, ELMIRA, N. Y.

BOOK ON Hair Beautifying FREE



We will send to any address our interesting and instructive book, telling all about correct care of the hair, proper styles for dressing, and how to become beautiful. This book also describes upwards of 500 complete line of switches and hair goods of every description and tells how we send

HAIR ON APPROVAL

To prove to you that we can save you money and give you the best live French hair, we will send you on ten days consignment any design you may want for comparison. If satisfied, keep the goods, if not, return them at our expense. We guarantee to match any shade or quality. Send sample of your hair and describe what you want.

A FINE SWITCH FOR $1.00

Also complete line of hair goods at like prices.

2 oz. 22 in. switch	$1.25.
2½ oz. 24 in. switch	2.25.
3½ oz. 26 in. switch	4.00.
Lightweight wavy switch	2.50.
Featherweight stemless switch	4.00.
22 in. long, natural, wavy natural curly pompadour	2.50.
Finest wigs $15.00 to	50.00.

Largest manufacturer in the world of hair goods.

E. BURNHAM
Dept 33 Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.
Retail 70-72 State St. Wholesale: 67-69 Washington St.

A Fair Offer!

TO CONVINCE DYSPEPTICS AND THOSE SUFFERING FROM STOMACH TROUBLES OF THE EFFICIENCY OF

Glycozone

I WILL SEND A

$1.00 BOTTLE FREE

(ONLY ONE TO A FAMILY)

to any one sending coupon and enclosing 25 cents to pay forwarding charges.

GLYCOZONE is an absolutely harmless remedy. It cleanses the membrane of the stomach and subdues inflamation, thus removing the cause of your trouble.

It cannot fail to help you, and will not harm you in the least.

Indorsed and successfully used by leading physicians for over 15 years.

Beware of concoctions of Oil of Vitriol, Sulphurous acid and water bearing similar names.

Sold by leading druggists. None genuine without my signature.

Charles Marchand

Chemist and Graduate of the "Ecole Centrale des Arts et Manufactures de Paris" (France).

57 Prince St., New York City.

FREE! Valuable booklet on How to Treat Diseases

COUPON

Send 5 free trial bottle of Glycozone, for which I enclose 25c to pay forwarding charges. Coupon good only until April 5, '06.

Name.....

Address.....

Druggist.....

WRITE LEGIBLY



FORTUNE BUILDING

is an art and a science.

Most fortunes are built through profitable investments.

Money grows and makes more money when profitably invested.

One good investment is worth a lifetime of labor.

Small amounts saved regularly and invested profitably will soon build a fortune and provide an income for life.

My business is that of handling high-grade investments that pay the largest profits possible consistent with perfect safety.

I am working on a wonderfully successful system that enables me to do this.

I have made millions of dollars for my 10,000 satisfied clients. Many of them are receiving 10 per cent., 20 per cent., 30 per cent., and even a higher rate of dividends per annum, while their original investments show a remarkable increase in value. I can do the same for you. If you desire to build a fortune, send me your name and I will mail you

FREE FOR SIX MONTHS

THE INVESTMENT HERALD

my illustrated investment paper, giving full information and explaining my successful system. It tells what I have done, how I do it, and gives advice that may be worth thousands of dollars to you. Write for it to-day.

A. L. WISNER & CO., BANKERS

Hudson Bldg., Suite 76, New York

January Jones



MADE A

Million

IN

11 MONTHS

for himself and his associates in the famous January lease of GOLDFIELD. A leasing and developing company has just been formed by Mr. Jones to take advantage of the opportunities for large profits in this great field. A few examples are:

January Lease in 11 months	$1,000,000
Reilly Lease in 12 months	$750,000
Kernick Lease (Jumbo) in 18 months	$1,000,000
Mizpah (Lynch & O'Meara) in 18 months	$900,000

Write at once for full details

JANUARY JONES EXPLORATION CO.

43 EXCHANGE PLACE, NEW YORK.

and GOLDFIELD, NEV.

Before You Invest

A dollar in anything get my book "How to Judge Investments." It tells you all about everything you should know before making any kind of an investment, either for a large or small amount. This book gives the soundest advice and may save you many dollars. Send two-cent stamp for a copy, do it now.

If you want to keep reliably posted on various kinds of investments send your name and address and get the Investors' Review for

3 Months Free. Address

Editor INVESTORS' REVIEW, 1670 Gaff Bldg., CHICAGO, ILL.

MONEY IN BANANAS

IS THE TITLE OF A BOOK THAT TELLS



how and where Bananas grow and the wonderful possibilities in the Banana industry for investors. If you want the safest and surest insurance against poverty and a life income of from $100. to $1,000 a year, write us at once for this

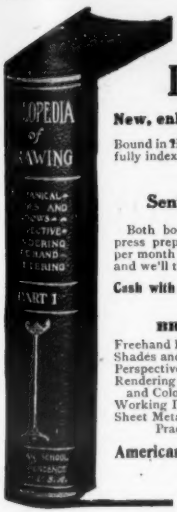
FREE BOOK

It presents the most remarkable opportunity for profitable investment ever offered.

CO-OPERATIVE TROPICAL FRUIT ASSOCIATION

32 BROADWAY - - NEW YORK

Mention this Magazine



Cyclopedia OF DRAWING

New, enlarged edition Two Volumes

Bound in Half Leather, 1200 pages (size 8x10 ins.) fully indexed; 1500 illustrations, plates, engravings, etc.

Sent FREE For Examination

Both books sent on five days' approval, express prepaid. If satisfactory send $1 and $1 per month for six months. Otherwise, notify us and we'll transfer the books absolutely free.

Cash with order, $6.50. Money refunded if not satisfactory.

BRIEF LIST OF SUBJECTS

Freehand Drawing	Mechanical Drawing
Shades and Shadows	Rendering in Pen and Ink
Perspective Drawing	Architectural Drawing
Rendering in Wash and Color	Water Color Hints for Draftsmen
Working Drawings	Machine Design
Sheet Metal Pattern Drafting	Tinsmithing
Practical Problems in Mensuration	

American School of Correspondence CHICAGO, ILL.

Mention Ainslee's Mag.

AN EASY WAY TO MAKE MONEY.

I resolved New Year's, that I would turn over a new leaf and do all in my power to assist others, and write you my experience, hoping many may be benefited as I have been. I have made $380 in 80 days, selling dishwashers. I did my housework at the same time. I do not canvass, people come or send for the dishwashers. They're lovely to sell. The machine washes and dries the dishes perfectly in three minutes, without putting the hands in water. Every lady who sees it wants one, as they only cost $5.00. I think any person can do as well as I have. Write to the Mound City Dishwasher Co., St. Louis, Mo., Department 25, and they will give you instructions and start you in the business. Dishwashers sell to everybody—dishes must be washed three times a day. It will not be long before dishwashers are more numerous than sewing machines, as they are cheaper and used so much more frequently. MRS. W. B.

UNREDEEMED DIAMONDS

WE have for sale the following unredeemed Diamonds, all reset in new mountings of all sizes and styles in Rings, Ear Screws, Studs, Brooches, and Stick Pins. We offer them as long as they last at

65 Cents on the Dollar

of their market value. These stones have accumulated on us, and owing to the small demand in Mobile, we are forced to resort to this means to dispose of them.

We will express you one or two out of either lot C. O. D., subject to examination, all charges paid whether you buy or not. If it's a big bargain and suits you keep it, if not return it to us. It won't cost you one cent to see and examine any of the stones.

112 Solitaire Diamonds at $20 each
102 " " at 25 "
119 " " at 40 "
88 " " at 50 "
64 Diamond Rings and Studs ranging in price from $65 to $450.
32 Fancy Diamond Cluster Rings from $20 to $125
47 Fine Diamond Brooches from $27.50 to $700

We give a guarantee with every Diamond. Reference, People's Bank of Mobile, Ala.

IGNATIUS FRIED, Diamond Broker, Mobile, Ala.

A Dream of Fair Women

(TENNYSON)



AN Art Portfolio containing (10) pictures of beautiful women, representing different types, from the oriental beauty to the Cowboy Girl of the Wild West. All made in the most beautiful and artistic colors. Size, 7x10 inches, made on artist stippled paper. Very appropriate for framing, and just the thing for your den.

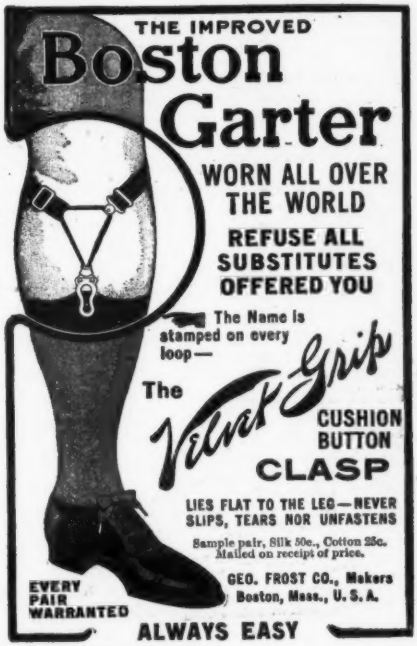
Sent prepaid to any address in the U. S. or Canada for

50c.

Express or P. O. money order, currency or U. S. stamps. Address

THE WHITE CITY ART COMPANY
360 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

P. S.—If you order within 10 days we will send you free a nifty dip entitled
If so soon I'm to be done for
What on earth was I begun for?



MAKE MONEY

Legitimately, positively and absolutely. Not in shares of gold mines, copper mines, or in oil wells, but in

GUARANTEED 6% INVESTMENTS

(PAYABLE SEMI-ANNUALLY)

PLUS DIVIDENDS ON PROFITS OF BUSINESS

secured by Real Estate in New York City and Greater New York suburbs.

SAFEST, SOUNDEST AND MOST PROFITABLE INVESTMENT EVER SUBMITTED TO THE PUBLIC.

N. Y. Bridge and Subway Realty Co.,

299d BROADWAY (Barclay Building) NEW YORK.

I. B. BROOKS, *President* L. SMADBECK, *Treasurer*

ESTABLISHED 19 YEARS ON BROADWAY.

WRITE FOR OUR BOOKLET

REFERENCES: Banks, Commercial Agencies, Commercial Houses and Corporations. Clergymen, lawyers and others of unquestionable standing wanted to act as our representatives in local Towns and Cities.

REPRESENTATIVES WANTED

MEN WHO CAN EARN FROM

$3,000 to $10,000 A YEAR.

We are financing one of the greatest and most profitable commercial enterprises of the day. The stock of this Company is a perfectly safe high grade guaranteed security now paying liberal dividends, while the future profits and possibilities are almost unlimited.

We desire first class representatives in every city and town. Excellent opportunities for the right men. Address at once for full particulars.

A. L. WISNER & CO., BANKERS.

32 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

AINSLEE'S is cause for renewed wonder that the magazine is able, month after month, to keep up its high standard of fiction. It is one of the extraordinary things in periodical publication.—*Indianapolis Sentinel.*



I Will Make You Prosperous

If you are honest and ambitious write me to-day. No matter where you live or what your occupation I will teach you the Real Estate business by mail; appoint you Special Representative of my Company in your town; start you in a profitable business of your own, and help you make big money at once.

Unusual opportunity for men without capital to become independent for life. Valuable book and full particulars free. Write to-day.

EDWIN R. MARDEN, Pres't

National Co-Operative Realty Co., 313 Athenaeum Bldg., Chicago



FLASH LIKE THE GENUINE

Day or night. Solid gold mounting. You can own a Diamond equal in brilliancy to any genuine Stone at one-thirtieth the cost.

BARODA DIAMONDS

stand acid test and expert examination. We guarantee them. See them first, then pay. **Catalogue Free.** Patent Ring Measure included for FIVE two-cent stamps.

THE BARODA COMPANY,

63-71 N Wabash Ave., CHICAGO, ILL.



$43.75 Buys This Rubber Tire Wagon

Union Quality. Fully Guaranteed. Best hickory wheels, ¾ in. **Rubber Tire,** long distance, dust proof, high arched axles; oil tempered springs. First quality material and finish. Worth nearly double our **Factory Price.** We ship for your examination, without a cent in advance, if desired, and allow

30 DAYS FREE TRIAL

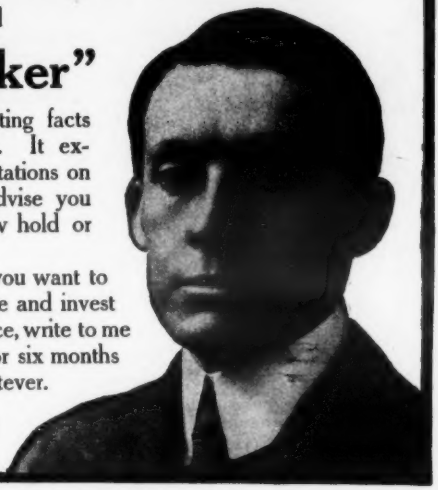
Money refunded on all purchases not satisfactory. **You save dealers' profits.** We build 150 styles of Vehicles, from $26.50 to $150.00. 50 styles Harness, $5.00 to $60.00. Write to-day for our 200 page **Illustrated Style Book. Free** for the asking.

UNION BUGGY CO., 20 Saginaw St., Pontiac, Mich.

I WANT TO SEND YOU MY MAGAZINE SIX MONTHS FREE

My Magazine is called

"The Money Maker"



and every month it gives the most interesting facts concerning stocks, bonds and real estate. It exposes financial fakirs and gives market quotations on all listed and unlisted stocks. It will advise you regarding the value of any stock you now hold or have been asked to buy.

If you want your money to grow, if you want to get ahead in the world, if you want to save and invest so that you can eventually gain independence, write to me for this magazine today. I'll send it free for six months and you will be under no obligations whatever.

W. M. OSTRANDER (Inc.)
107 North American Building, Philadelphia

Unlimited Possibilities

$10000000000000000

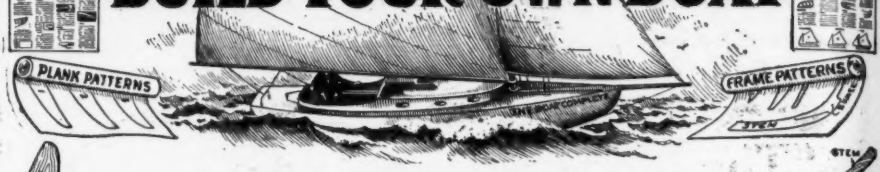
Mexicana
Montezuma
Manhattan

WHEN THERE IS PROOF POSITIVE

of very large mineralized bodies. This proof is always in my posession before I ever offer a security to my clients. I stand responsible for every statement made in the literature regarding Mexicana, Montezuma and Manhattan. 12 PER CENT is now being paid by the MEXICANA Company which is beyond question one of the world's richest properties. MONTEZUMA represents a safe, sure and sound property in which Samuel Newhouse Esq. of Salt Lake City, myself and others are interested. Write me for full details of these three great properties and HOW TO MAKE MONEY WITH ABSOLUTE SAFETY.

WM. B. MUCKLOW
10 WALL STREET, NEW YORK.

BUILD YOUR OWN BOAT



BY THE BROOKS SYSTEM

Anyone using the Brooks System, no matter how inexperienced he is in the use of tools, can build his own row boat, sail boat, launch or canoe, in his leisure time, at the cost of a little lumber and a few nails. All the boats built last year, by all the boat factories in the United States, combined in one fleet, do not equal the number of boats built during the same time by novices using the Brooks System.

The **Brooks System** consists of **exact size printed paper patterns** of every piece of the boat; **detailed instructions to build** and a **complete set of half-tone illustrations** covering every step of the work; an **itemized bill of all material required** and how to secure it. We tell you how to lay the pattern of each part on the proper piece of material—how to cut it out—and how to fasten each part in its right place.

One man built sixteen boats last season—another built ten—the materials cost very little—we furnish the patterns—they did the work and sold the boats at a big profit. Over ten thousand amateurs successfully built boats by the Brooks System last year. 50 per cent. of them have built their second boat.

You need buy nothing from us but the patterns. All kinds and sizes, from a small row boat to a 51-foot cruising yacht.

When so ordered, patterns are expressed, the charges, C. O. D., allowing examination. Full line of Knock Down and Completed Boats. **Illustrated Catalog of all our boats free. Books we publish:** Useful Information for the Amateur Yachtsman and Boat Builder. Price 25 cents. The Principle and Operation of Marine Gasoline Motors. Price 25 cents. Book of Designs for Practical Boat Builders. Price 25 cents.

BROOKS BOAT MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Originators of the Pattern System of Boat Building **1403 Ship St., Bay City, Mich., U. S. A.**





Mullins Steel Boats

Motor Boats, Row Boats, Hunting and Fishing Boats

built of steel with air chambers in each end like a life boat. Faster, more buoyant, practically indestructible, don't leak, dry out and are absolutely safe. **They can't sink.** No calking, no bailing, no trouble. Every boat is guaranteed. Highly endorsed by sportsmen. The ideal boat for pleasure, summer resorts, parks, etc.



Write for Catalogue.

The W. H. Mullins Company, 325 Franklin St., Salem, Ohio



MOTOR BOAT PERFECTION

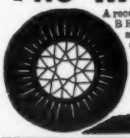
At popular prices, free from complications and care is a 20th Century possibility. **LET US SHOW YOU.**

122 W. 24th St., New York, N. Y. 1321 Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.
192 Jefferson Ave., Detroit, Mich. 38 Delaware Ave., Camden, N. J.
509 Tremont St., Boston, Mass. 321 First Ave., S., Seattle, Wash.
And All Other Principal Cities.

If interested in Steam or Sail Yachts, Motor Boats, Row Boats, Hunting Boats, Dingeys, Canoes, Engines and Boilers, write us. **Satisfaction Guaranteed.**

RACINE BOAT MFG. CO., Box N, Muskegon, Mich.

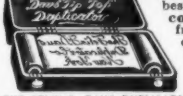
The Meteoric Diamond



A recently discovered GEM of SURPASSING BEAUTY, BRILLIANCY and ENDURANCE. Not offered as an imitation but as a SUBSTITUTE for the real diamond. SOLID GOLD mountings only, latest designs. We have no agents. Price within reach of all. Let us tell you all about it in our FREE DESCRIPTIVE BOOKLET.

THE HILL BROS CO., Box 517 Columbus, O.
American Agents Brazilian Mining Co.

What Is Daus' Tip-Top?



TO PROVE that "Daus' Tip-Top" is the best and simplest device for making **100 copies** from pen-written and **50 copies** from typewritten original, we will ship complete duplicator, cap size, **without deposit,** on **ten (10) days' trial.**

Price **$7.50** less trade discount of **33⅓** per cent., or **$5 net**

THE FELIX O. DAUS DUPLICATOR CO., Daus Bldg., 111 John St., N. Y. City

Write to-day.



Catalog free with full information.

Motsinger Auto-Sparker

starts and runs

Gas Engines without Batteries.

No other machine can do it successfully for lack of original patents owned by us. No twist motion in our drive. No belt or switch necessary. No batteries whatever, for make and break or jump-spark. Water and dust-proof. Fully guaranteed.

MOTSINGER DEVICE MFG. CO., 94 Main Street, Pendleton, Ind., U.S.A.

TYPEWRITERS ALL MAKES



All the standard machines **SOLD** or **RENTED ANYWHERE** at **¼ to ½ M'F'R'S** prices, allowing **RENTAL TO APPLY ON PRICE.** Shipped with privilege of examination.

Write for Illustrated Catalogue

TYPEWRITER EMPORIUM, 402 La Salle St., CHICAGO



Happiness for Sick or Well

COLUMBIA GRAPHOPHONE

PEOPLE of sensitive nerves enjoy the delightful music and other entertainment from the Graphophone, because it is peculiarly free from the slightest imperfections in tone quality.

Why multiply words about the admitted standard of talking machine excellence? You know all about it, and that there is

ONLY ONE GRAPHOPHONE

though its success has produced imitators in both disc and cylinder lines. You can't, however, know what wonderful progress is being made and what a vast difference there is in musical and natural tone quality between the Columbia Graphophone and the "just as good" talking machines, cleverly advertised under various names, until you have seen and heard the

1906 DISC AND CYLINDER GRAPHOPHONE MODELS

Fill out coupon below and send to your nearest dealer, or to us, and we'll send you our "Tale of Two Cities" circular, with full particulars as to prices; how to secure a

FREE TRIAL

on any outfit desired; and how to purchase for

CASH OR CONVENIENT PAYMENTS

anywhere in the United States. We will also send you a copy of "Laughing Story—Leaves From My Voice-Album," suggesting a very fascinating use of the Graphophone, and giving you a good hearty laugh, all without charge.

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH CO., GENL.,
90-92 West Broadway, New York.

Stores in all principal cities. Dealers everywhere.
Creators of the Talking Machine Industry. Largest Talking Machine Manufacturers in the world. Owners of the Fundamental Patents.

Highest Awards Wherever Exhibited in Competition.
Grand Prix, Paris, 1900. Double Grand Prize, St. Louis, 1904.

Kindly mail me, free, your "Tale of Two Cities" circular and "Laughing Story—Leaves From My Voice-Album," with complete information regarding 1906 Model Disc and Cylinder Graphophones.

Name.....

St. and No.....

City.....

State.....

A-4

Ainslee's Magazine

"THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS"

FOR APRIL

will contain an assortment of stories, essays, and poems remarkable not only for general excellence, but for originality and variety of theme. It is, on the whole, we think, a little better than March's, just as that number was a little better than February's. We are making improvements every month, and we propose to keep right on making them.



Reduced facsimile of the cover design for April AINSLEE'S. *Drawn by Sidney Adamson.*

"Capricious Caroline"

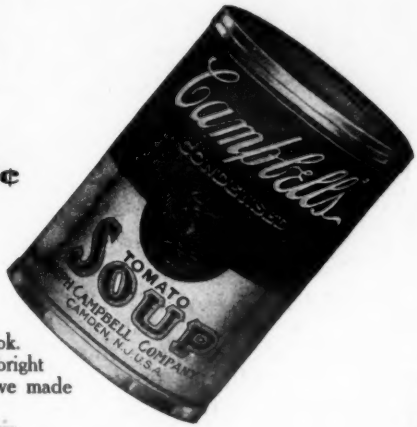
by *E. Maria Albanesi,* author of "Susannah and One Other," is the novelette in the April issue. It is a story with a very original plot, and is brimful of interest. You are sure to like it.

THE SHORT STORIES

"Grim-Visaged War," by *Anna A. Rogers,* is a tale of the Philippines in wartime. **"In the Limousine,"** by *Churchill Williams,* is an automobile story. Others are **"Two White Blackbirds,"** by *Jane Maurice;* **"The Lady and the Handicapper,"** by *P S. Carlson;* **"The Reincarnation of Captain Strabo,"** by *Joseph C. Lincoln;* **"Frankie Proposes,"** by *Lucia Chamberlain;* **"The Truth,"** by *May Harris;* **"Lady Betty's Lament,"** by *Grace MacGowan Cooke,* and **"The Winning of Miss Tillinghast,"** by *Cyrus Townsend Brady.*

OTHER FEATURES

In a notable essay entitled **"The Growth of the Household,"** *Anne Rittenhouse* disproves the theory that we are becoming a nation of flat-dwellers. *Mary Manners* discourses on **"The Easily Divorced."** *Channing Pollock,* the well-known playwright, whose play, "The Little Gray Lady," has been one of the successes of the New York season, writes of theatrical matters in his usual entertaining fashion. The department, **"For Book Lovers,"** contains a wealth of information concerning current literary productions, and there are a number of poems quite up to the AINSLEE'S standard, which, as our readers know, is a high one.



10¢

21 Kinds

We have a little book.
It is filled with the bright children's faces which have made our product famous.
They are in rich colors.
A merry little jingle describes each.
This exquisite souvenir is yours for the asking if you send your name and address.
In the meantime

Campbell's SOUPS



Continue to be just as pure and wholesome as these little faces are fresh and innocent.
They can't be otherwise.
Nothing but the best goes into our product, so nothing but the best can result.
To this sound deduction add the fact that it is vital to our welfare to be careful with these good things, and you can't dodge our wholesome logic.
One ten-cent can makes enough soup for the average family.

"Just add a can of hot water and serve"

Joseph Campbell Company
21-41 River St.,
Camden, N. J., U. S. A.

Send for handsome illustrated booklet No. 39

Ready in a wink
For the sudden guest.
No heat, no hurry;
No waste, no worry.



ED PINAUD'S

EAU DE QUININE HAIR TONIC has known virtues that are positive blessings. For more than 100 years it has held its enviable reputation among the rich and the poor, the famous and the unknown. It deserves to.

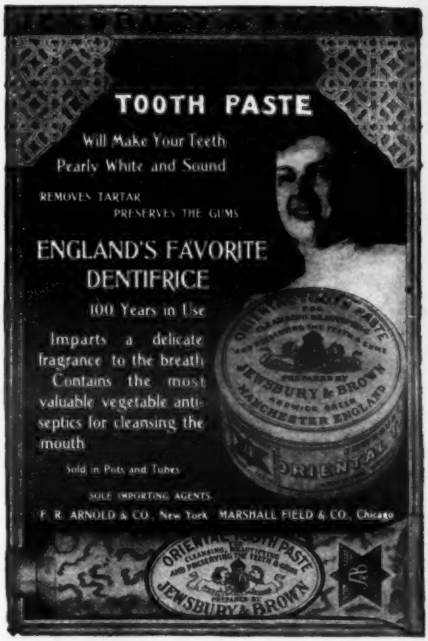
It cleanses the scalp from dandruff, it beautifies the hair by restoring strength and lustre—it prevents the hair from falling out.

Rub it gently into the scalp—just a little of it, and you will feel your scalp tingle under its healing, stimulating, exhilarating influence.

Take care of your hair, *write now* for trial bottles of ED. PINAUD'S famous preparations.

Free ED. PINAUD'S EAU DE QUININE HAIR TONIC for three applications; enough exquisite perfume (Lilas de France) for five times, and famous ELIXIR DENTIFRICE for five times. Send 10c. to pay postage and packing.

ED. PINAUD'S American Offices:
ED. PINAUD Bldg., Room 106,
New York City.





Hair on the Face
NECK AND ARMS

Instantly Removed Without Injury to the Most Delicate Skin.

In comp unding an incomplete mixture was accidentally spilled on the back of the hand, and on washing afterward it was discovered that the hair was completely removed. We named the new discovery

"MODENE"

Apply for a few minutes and the hair disappears as if by magic. IT CANNOT FAIL. Modene supercedes electrolysis. Used by people of refinement, and recommended by all who have tested its merits. Modene sent by mail in safety mailing cases on receipt of $1.00 per bottle. Postage stamps taken. Address

MODENE MANUFACTURING CO. Dept. 525, Cincinnati, O.

GRAY HAIR

25¢ TRIAL WILL PROVE

To prove that Mrs. Potter's Hygienic Walnut Juice Hair Stain makes Gray, Faded, Bleached, or Patchy Hair A BEAUTIFUL NATURAL BROWN, varying in shade as desired, and that it is vastly more satisfactory in every way than the ordinary dyes, "restorers," "renewers," "invigorators," etc.,

WE WILL SEND LIBERAL TRIAL

in plain sealed wrapper, postage prepaid, on receipt of 25 cents (stamps or coin) to cover cost, including **FREE** Mrs. Potter's valuable booklet on Gray Hair. Mrs. Potter's Hygienic Walnut Juice Hair Stain is not an experiment. It is an established, proven success. Money refunded if it does not verify every claim. Send 25 cents at once for Trial—enough for thorough test—or $1.00 for large regular size, **ENOUGH TO LAST ONE YEAR.**



MRS. POTTER'S HYGIENIC DEPOT 7 GROTON BLDG CINCINNATI OHIO



4th The soldier seeking reputation at the cannon's mouth.

HORLICK'S MALTED MILK

FOR

Shakespeare's Seven Ages

On the march, in the tent, in the hospital and on shipboard Horlick's Malted Milk has proved unequaled for tissue-building and restoring strength. A delightful, recuperative drink for the invalid and aged, the sick, wounded, and convalescent.

Pure, rich milk, from our sanitary dairies, with the extract of the malted cereals, in powder form; prepared instantly by stirring in water. More nutritious and digestible than tea, coffee or cocoa.

In Lunch Tablet form also. A healthy confection, and a convenient lunch for professional and busy people. At all druggists.

A sample, vest pocket lunch case, also booklet, giving valuable recipes, sent free if mentioned.

ASK FOR HORLICK'S; others are imitations.

Horlick's Malted Milk Co.

Racine, Wis., U. S. A.

London, England. Montreal, Canada.





"Silver Plate that Wears"

For beauty of design, careful manufacturing, brilliancy of finish and long wear.

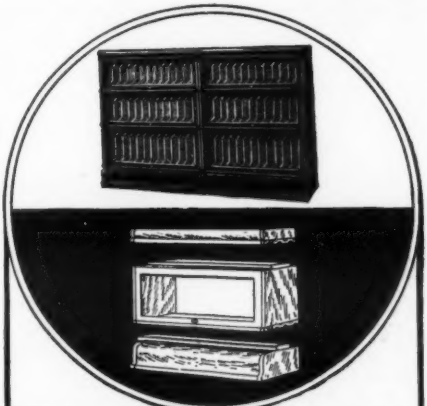
"1847 ROGERS BROS."

spoons, forks, knives, etc., are unexcelled. Recognized as the highest standard of Silver Plate excellence.

For sale by leading dealers.

Send for **New Catalogue "Q-2"** to aid in selections.

MERIDEN BRITANNIA CO.,
Meriden, Conn.
(International Silver Co., Successor.)



YOU can obtain G.-W. "Elastic" Book Cases fitted with **bevel plate glass, leaded glass or plain glass doors,** and with panel ends or plain ends.

There is practically no limit to the varied and artistic arrangements that can be made with these units, which embody the best material, finish and mechanical construction.

All units controlled by our non-binding door equalizer.

Uniform prices everywhere. Obtainable from authorized agents in nearly one thousand cities. Where not represented we ship on approval, freight paid.

Write for catalogue 105J

The Globe-Wernicke Co.
CINCINNATI.
Branch Stores—New York, Boston, Chicago.



A Fitting Finale
To a good dinner

Liqueur

Pères Chartreux

—GREEN AND YELLOW—

Known as **Chartreuse**, the highest-grade after-dinner **Liqueur**.

At first-class Wine Merchants, Grocers, Hotels, Cafés.
Bätjer & Co., 45 Broadway, New York, N. Y.,
Sole Agents for United States.





YOU like the uniformity of flavor in your favorite brand of cigars—how about your cocktails?

Are you going to accept any chance mixer's decoction, or order CLUB COCKTAILS? Their excellence has been attained through scientific blending and subsequent ageing to perfection. There is but one perfect brand—CLUB. Specify CLUB for your own satisfaction.

Seven kinds—Manhattan, Martini, Vermouth, Whiskey, Holland Gin, Tom Gin and York.

G. F. HEUBLEIN & BRO., Sole Proprietors
Hartford New York London

LEAKS

Only 15 per cent of the energy of a ton of coal burned under a steam boiler is converted into power. The other 85 per cent is paid for, but lost.

Mr. Businessman—how much of the real power of your business engine is lost through overlooked leaks, opportunities to sell that you never even heard about?

Press Clippings

will save you much of this lost business energy. They will stop up the selling leaks, open up new markets for your goods and find you buyers whom you would never hear about in any other way. They will place before you every scrap of information printed in this country pertaining to your line of business and give it to you from day to day while it is fresh and valuable and before your competitors have even heard of it.

The International Press Clipping Bureau,
the largest press clipping bureau in the world, will send you everything printed in every newspaper, magazine or trade journal in the country, on any subject you may select.

This Bureau reads and clips 55,000 papers and other periodicals each month, and even if you are now a subscriber to some other clipping bureau, it will pay you to investigate our superior service. Write for our book about Press Clippings and our Daily Business Reports and how they may be applied to your profit. We will send it to you free and will also quote you a special bargain rate for a trial month, if you will name the subject. Address

International Press Clipping Bureau
100 Boyce Building, Chicago, Illinois, U. S. A.



Gillette Safety Razor

"THE GILLETTE" gives a **SMOOTH SHAVE** without discomfort, without roughening the skin, without irritation, without creating rash, without cuts, without loss of time.

"THE GILLETTE" is the way to escape from barber-shop waiting, wasting and torture.



12 BLADES, 24 SHARP EDGES.

EVERY BLADE WILL GIVE FROM 20 TO 40 CLOSE, SMOOTH, COMFORTABLE SHAVES.

Triple silver-plated set with 12 blades
Quadruple gold-plated set with monogram
Special combination set with brush and soap holders
} In Velvet-Lined Cases.

We offer 10 extra blades for 50 cents, which give 20 keen cutting edges, equal to 20 sharp razors; sufficient for a year's use.

At this new low price no blades exchanged. This does away with all bother and confusion. Science has reached the acme of skill in the fusion, tempering, hardening and sharpening of these blades. The process is one of the wonders of the 20th century. The steel is of a quality as fine as a Damascus sword.

THE MOST SIMPLE AND DURABLE SHAVING DEVICE IN THE WORLD. NO HINGES, NO CLASPS, NO SPRINGS, and nothing to learn or adjust. Simply lather and shave in four minutes' time.

Our new combination set, with razor, including soap and brush in silver holders in same box, is now ready.



SOLD BY ALL LEADING DRUG, CUTLERY AND HARDWARE DEALERS.

ASK TO SEE THEM, AND FOR OUR BOOKLET, OR WRITE TO US FOR SPECIAL TRIAL OFFER.

GILLETTE SALES COMPANY, Times Building, New York City.



AUTOCRAT

The Exclusive Stationery

SO that you may give AUTOCRAT, the Exclusive Correspondence Stationery, a good, fair trial,

We Will Send

to you postpaid, upon receipt of ten cents, a liberal assortment of these papers in the various finishes, sizes, and tints, including our latest Linen Vellum, with envelopes to match. Also our little booklet, "*Polite Correspondence*," giving the approved method of extending and accepting social invitations.

It will pay you to ask your stationer for AUTOCRAT Stationery, and before doing so make up your mind not to accept some other kind. If your dealer does not keep it, drop us a line and we will tell you who does.

WHITE & WYCKOFF MFG. CO.

75 Water Street — HOLYOKE MASS.

Plush Pillow Top FREE

Send us your name at once, with 25c. to pay cost of shipping, etc., and we will send you this beautiful genuine **Plush Pillow Top** printed with artist's sketch of **Maxine Elliott, Julia Marlowe, or Maude Adams,** ready so that anyone can burn it with handsome effect. Choice of old **gold, tan, or light green plush.** Size, 17x17 in. Same burned $1.50. Only **one Free top** to one address.

The NEWEST PYROGRAPHY IDEA



SPECIAL

Our No. 97 $2.50 outfit only **$1.65**

This splendid outfit is complete for Burning on plush, wood, leather, etc. Includes fine **Platinum Point, Cork Handle, Rubber Tubing, Double-action Bulb, Metal Union Cork, Bottle, Alcohol Lamp Two Pieces Stamped Practice Wood and full directions, all in neat leatherette box.** Ask your dealer—or we will send C.O.D. If you like it when you get it, then pay our special price. When cash accompanies order we include, **free,** our **64 P. Pelican instruction Handbook** (price 25c), the most complete pyrography handbook published.



Write for it today



NEW 1906 Pyrography Catalog No. A 57 FREE

Contains **92 Pages** (12 in three colors) with **2000 Illustrations,** including **actress heads,** designs by **Gibson** and other **good artists,** on articles of wood, leather and plush of every description; also shows our extensive line of **Pyrography Outfits and supplies.** The largest and most elaborate pyrography catalog ever issued.

TRADE T&C CHICAGO MARK

THAYER & CHANDLER,
160-164 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago

"Largest Makers of Pyrography Goods in the World."

$25 REWARD

is hereby offered for the arrest, conviction and imprisonment of any person obtaining money under false pretenses for subscriptions to Ainslee's Magazine, or to any other periodical published by the members of this Association. In view of the number of frauds now operating throughout the country, the public is hereby cautioned to subscribe for no periodical whatever, without first satisfying themselves that the one who solicits their subscription is duly authorized to receive same.

THE PERIODICAL PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
32 Waverly Place
New York

102 Links in the Regal Chain

Until the Regal system began, fifteen years ago, it was only a *theory* that six-dollar shoes could be built and sold at the wholesale price by simply cutting out the useless *extra* profits and doing business *directly* with the consumer.

One Regal store then—102 *now* and 38 new ones to be opened this year.

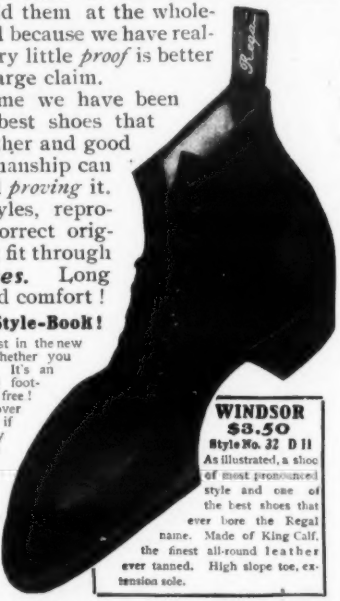
And it's because we *have* made six-dollar shoes and sold them at the wholesale price, and because we have realized that a very little *proof* is better than a very large claim.

All this time we have been making the best shoes that the finest leather and good honest workmanship can produce—and *proving* it.

Custom styles, reproduced from correct originals. Custom fit through ***quarter-sizes.*** Long wear and solid comfort!

Get the Regal Style-Book!

You will find interest in the new Regal Style-Book whether you wear Regals or not. It's an authority on correct footwear, and it's sent free! Regal stores all over the country—and if you are not in easy reach of one of them the Style-Book will bring one to you. Tells you how to order by mail, and how to get fitted *without taking chances of dissatisfaction.*



WINDSOR
$3.50
Style No. 32 D 11
As illustrated, a shoe of most pronounced style and one of the best shoes that ever bore the Regal name. Made of King Calf, the finest all-round leather ever tanned. High slope toe, extension sole.

$3.50 Seventy-five Regal Styles—and the regular price is **$3.50 as usual.** But to meet an insistent demand, we have made up a number of special models at $4 per pair. All of the leathers and other materials in them are the *best* of the *best*—and few genuine custom-made $12 shoes equal their handsome appearance. **$4.00**

Regal shoes are delivered, carriage prepaid, anywhere in the United States, and all points covered by the Parcels Post System, for 25 cents extra to cover delivery charges.

REGAL SHOE CO., Inc.,

MAIL-ORDER DEPT.: BOSTON, MASS., 726 SUMMER STREET

Mail-Order Sub-Stations:

Factory, East Whitman, Mass. Box 607. 820 Market Street, San Francisco, Cal.
London, Eng., E. C., 97 Cheapside, cor. Lawrence Lane.

THE LARGEST RETAIL SHOE BUSINESS IN THE WORLD

REGAL SHOES FOR MEN AND WOMEN

102 REGAL STORES NOW.
38 New Ones this Season.

Regal Shoe Stores—Men's

BOSTON, MASS.—113 Summer St., 169 Tremont St.
NEW YORK—165-167 B'way, Cor. Ann & Nassau, Duane & B'way, 785 B'way, 1211 B'way, 1341 B'way, 166 W. 125th St., 507 8th Ave., 6th Ave. & 21st. 150 E. 14th.
BROOKLYN, N. Y.—357 Fulton St., 1003 Broadway, 111 Broadway, 466 Fifth Ave.
JERSEY CITY, N. J.—66 Newark Ave.
PHILA., PA.—1218B Market, 732 Chestnut, 1224 Market, S. E. cor. 8th & Race.
NEWARK, N. J.—841 Broad St.
CHICAGO, ILL.—103 Dearborn St.
ST. LOUIS, MO.—618 Olive St.
DETROIT, MICH.—122 Woodward Ave.
WASHINGTON, D. C.—1003 Penn'vania Av.
CLEVELAND, OHIO—69 Euclid Ave.
LOUISVILLE, KY.—346 W. Market St.
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.—820 Market St., 17 O'Farrell St.
ST. PAUL, MINN.—382 Robert St.
MILWAUKEE, WIS.—212 Grand Ave.
CINCINNATI, OHIO.—429 Vine St.
PROVIDENCE, R. I.—252 Westminster St.
ATLANTA, GA.—6 Whitehall St.
MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.—526 Nicollet Ave.
PITTSBURG, PA.—439 Smithfield St.
BUFFALO, N. Y.—364 Main St.
BALTIMORE, MD.—6 E. Baltimore St.
LONDON, ENG.—97 Cheapside.
UTICA, N. Y.—138 Genessee St.
NASHVILLE, TENN.—515 Church St.
ROCHESTER, N. Y.—40 E. Main St.
NEW ORLEANS, LA.—631 Canal St.
SYRACUSE, N. Y.—344 S. Salina St.
KANSAS CITY, MO.—1019 Main St.
RICHMOND, VA.—611 E. Broad St.
OAKLAND, CAL.—22 San Pablo Ave.
NEW HAVEN, CONN.—878 Chapel St.
LOS ANGELES, CAL.—302 So. Broadway
DENVER, COL.—528 16th St.
SEATTLE, WASH.—1211 Second Ave.
MEXICO CITY. SAN LUIS POTOSI, MEX.
PARRAL, MEXICO. CANANEA, MEXICO
SAVANNAH, GA.—118 Whittaker St.
GUADALAJARA, MEX. LYNN, MASS.
NORFOLK, VA.—8 Granby St.
NEWPORT, R. I.—176 Thames St.
ALTOONA, PA.—1124 11th Ave.
TACOMA, WASH.—11th & Commerce Sts.
PANAMA, SO. AM. MANILA, P. I.
ILOILO, P. I. TAUNTON, MASS.—7 Main.
HARTFORD, CONN.—85 Asylum St. **E. WHITMAN, MASS.**—opp. P. O. **WILKES-BARRE, PA.**—12 S. Main. **TAMPA, FLA.**—714 Franklin. **BIRMINGHAM, ALA.**
HAVERHILL, MASS.—97 Merrimack St.
SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

Regal Shoe Stores—Women's

Boston, Mass.—109 Summer St., 169 Tremont St. **New York, N. Y.**—785 Broadway, 1339 Broadway, 166 W. 125th St., 6th Ave. & 21st St. **Brooklyn, N. Y.**—1003 Broadway, 466 Fifth Ave. **Newark, N. J.**—841 Broad St. **Philadelphia, Pa.**—1216 B Market St. **Jersey City, N. J.**—66 Newark Ave. **Cleveland, Ohio**—69 Euclid Ave. **Minneapolis, Minn.**—526 Nicollet Ave. **St. Paul, Minn.**—382 Robert St. **San Francisco, Cal.**—820 Market St., 17 O'Farrell St. **Buffalo, N. Y.**—362 Main St. **Providence, R. I.**—252 Westminster St. **Baltimore, Md.**—6 E. Baltimore St. **Chicago, Ill.**—74 Washington St. **Syracuse, N. Y.**—564 S. Salina St. **New Haven, Conn.**—878 Chapel St. **Richmond, Va.**—611 E. Broad St. **Oakland, Cal.**—22 San Pablo Ave. **Los Angeles, Cal.**—302 So. Broadway. **Denver, Col.**—528 16th St. **Seattle, Wash.**—1211 2d Ave. **Mexico City. Savannah, Ga.**—118 Whittaker St. **Norfolk, Va.**—8 Granby St. **Newport, R. I.**—176 Thames St. **Altoona, Pa.**—1124 11th Ave. **Tacoma, Wash.**—11th & Commerce Sts. **Panama, So. Am. Taunton, Mass.**—7 Main St. **Monterey, Mexico. E. Whitman, Mass.**—opp. P. O. **Wilkes-Barre, Pa.**—12 S. Main St. **Tampa, Fla.**—714-16-18 Franklin St. **Haverhill, Mass.**, 97 Merrimack St.

Pabst Extract

Health

is nature's choicest gift. You must occasionally help nature. When you are worn out by care, work or worry, and long for health like the "Pabst Girl," try

Pabst Extract

The "Best Tonic"

It helps nature by aiding the digestion, soothing the nervous system, and building up your strength. It is just pure malt—the most nourishing food you can take.

25 cents at all druggists.
Insist upon the original.

Pabst Extract Dept.
Milwaukee, Wis.,
U. S. A.





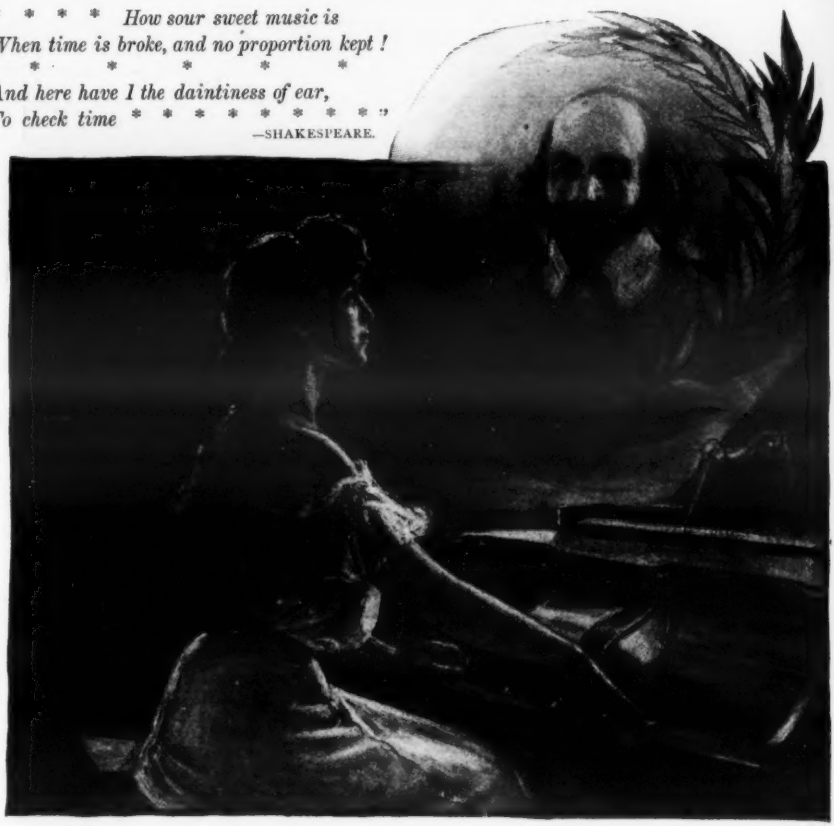
THERE are many cigarettes as good as their prices allow; but there is only one brand made without regard to cost of production and that is

EGYPTIAN DEITIES
CIGARETTES

The Turkish leaf used in them is the most expensive the market affords, and its value is greatly increased by the unceasing care taken to thoroughly mature and properly handle it. No other cigarette ever made is so smooth, mellow, exquisitely mild and perfectly uniform in shape and flavor.

No. 1 size, 10 for 35c. No. 3 size, 10 for 25c.

*" * * * How sour sweet music is*
When time is broke, and no proportion kept!
** * * * **
And here have I the daintiness of ear,
*To check time * * * * * * * * * *"*
—SHAKESPEARE.



AFTER being bored by some one's monotonous, regular, thumping, have you ever experienced the pleasure of hearing some one else sit down and play with exquisite shading, phrasing and accenting?

If your ear is sensitive, if you want music, want to play yourself, though your hands are untrained,

JUST ONE PIANO PLAYER

THE ANGELUS

WILL SATISFY YOU

because it has the Phrasing Lever (mastering time) has the Melody Buttons (giving expression) and has the Pneumatic (controlling power and human touch).

The Angelus, under *your* complete control, will play *your* piano, any piano, will play any composition as you *want* it played.

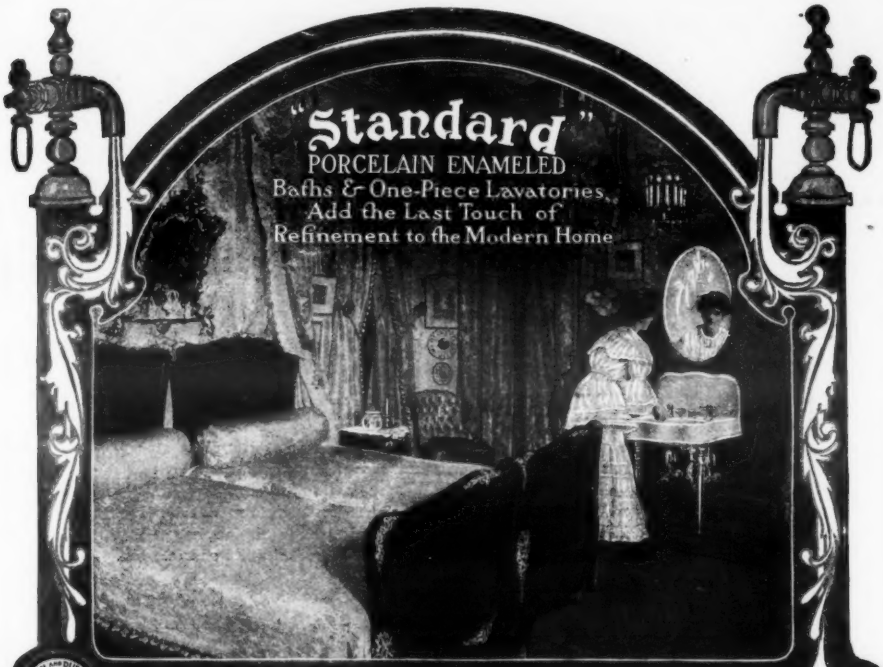
And, one word more—The Angelus will do literally and exactly what we say. Prove it yourself.

Our beautiful souvenir art calendar showing the musical instruments of different periods, from the lyre of the Egyptians to the grand piano of to-day, reproduced with absolute faithfulness to detail, in dainty water color facsimile on heavy art paper (10 x 12¾ inches), ribbon tied, will be mailed for twenty-five cents (stamps or coin) and mention of this publication.

PURCHASED BY ROYALTY AND THE WORLD'S GREATEST MUSICIANS — SEND FOR BOOKLET

THE WILCOX & WHITE CO.

Established 1876 — MERIDEN, CONN., U. S. A.



The charm of a dainty bedroom is greatly enhanced by the installation of a "Standard" Porcelain Enameled One-Piece Lavatory. Its gracefulness of design, its snowy lustrous whiteness, and its absolute freedom from crevices where dust and dirt can lodge, make it infinitely more sanitary and attractive than the old time washstand. With a bedroom so equipped the occupant is to a great degree independent of the bathroom. The cost is moderate—the comfort value enormous.

Our Book, "MODERN BATHROOMS," shows many beautiful Lavatory designs suitable for bedrooms with prices in detail. It also tells you how to plan, buy and arrange your bathroom, and illustrates many beautiful and inexpensive as well as luxurious rooms, showing the cost of each fixture in detail, together with many hints on decoration, tiling, etc. It is the most complete and beautiful booklet ever issued on the subject, and contains 100 pages. FREE for six cents postage, and the name of your plumber and architect (if selected).

The ABOVE *"Anona"* Lavatory, *Plate P.520* can be purchased from any plumber at a cost approximating $54.50—not counting freight, labor or piping.

CAUTION: Every piece of "Standard" Ware bears our "Standard" "Green and Gold" guarantee label, and has our trade-mark "Standard" cast on the outside. Unless the label and trade-mark are on the fixture it is not "Standard" Ware. Refuse substitutes—they are all inferior and will cost you more in the end.

Address **Standard Sanitary Mfg. Co. Dept. O, Pittsburgh, U. S. A.**

Offices and Showrooms in New York: "Standard" Building, 35-37 West 31st Street.
London, England, 22 Holborn Viaduct, E. C.



First Among Pianos

By universal consent the Steinway Piano is accorded first place among the pianos of the world. Great artists and composers acknowledge it to be the supreme medium of instrumental interpretation; and among music-loving people, it obtains no less recognition as the fitting piano for the home. Piano-makers, regarding it as the one piano worthy of emulation, have taken it apart and examined it minutely in the hope of discovering its secret. But they have never reproduced

The Steinway

nor can they, unless it be possible to reproduce the generations of genius and devotion that have made it what it is—the first piano of the age.

In pianos, it pays to buy only the best; therefore, if you intend purchasing a piano, you can afford a Steinway. Our latest models, the Vertegrand at $500, and the Miniature Grand at $750, are wonderful piano values. It must be remembered that the life of a Steinway is much longer than that of other pianos. Should you be compelled to dispose of your instrument, the Steinway will always bring a higher price than any other make of piano. From any point of view, whether artistic or commercial, the Steinway is the great piano investment.

These pianos can be bought from any authorized Steinway dealer, with cost of freight and handling added.

Illustrated catalogue and booklets sent upon request.



VERTEGRAND
PRICE $500

STEINWAY & SONS
Steinway Hall
107 and 109 East 14th Street
New York



MINIATURE GRAND
PRICE $750

Swift's Silver Leaf Lard

Little Cook-ing Lessons



Fried Chicken

Cut a Premium Milk Fed Chicken weighing about three pounds into quarters. Rub the pieces with pepper and salt and roll in flour. Melt in a frying pan enough Silver Leaf Lard to nearly cover the pieces of chicken. Heat the lard until it will cause a crumb of bread dropped in to almost instantly turn a golden brown. Then lay in the chicken and fry slowly until tender. When done remove and lay for a moment on cheese cloth or soft brown paper to absorb the grease. Serve garnished with parsley.

Swift & Company, U. S. A.

Swift & Company, U.S.A.



CHINS

It is under the chin that there is most apt to be irritation in shaving, and that's where the danger comes in of using any but the purest and most carefully prepared shaving soap.

The pure, creamy, soothing, antiseptic lather of

Williams' SHAVING SOAPS

guarantees freedom from irritation; is the only kind that will keep your face and chin in a smooth velvety healthful condition, and make shaving what it should be, a pleasant part of your morning toilet.

Send 4 Cents in Stamps for (Trial) Shaving Stick (enough for 50 shaves)



WILLIAMS' SHAVING STICKS, LUXURY SHAVING TABLETS, TOILET WATERS, TALCUM POWDER, JERSEY CREAM TOILET SOAP, WILLIAMS' TAR SOAP, ETC. — Sold Everywhere —

THE J.B. WILLIAMS CO., Glastonbury, Conn.